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COMMENTARY  
ON THE  
PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT,

BY THE LATE  
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VOL. II.  
YESAYA, 'OBADYA, AND MIKHA.



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IN the present volume a few of the author's references to his untranslated works have been quoted in English for the convenience of the English reader. The numerous *paronomasiai* of Isaiah and Micah have had at times to receive in our tongue a form slightly different from that they bear in the German, but in almost every case the German has then been quoted. The Table of Chronological Arrangements of "Isaiah" at the end of the volume was drawn up with the hope that it might prove useful to readers of the prophet and of one of the best of his *exegetai*.—TR.



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# ERRATA.

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- Page 41, line 3, read פֶּאֶר instead of פִּי.
- „ 41, line 16, read מַעֲשֶׂה instead of מִי.
- „ 43, note, read TR. instead of TRS.
- „ 96, line 4, read הַשְׂכִּירָה instead of הַשְׂכִּי.
- „ 115, line 24, read *Amîr* instead of *Amôr*.
- „ 153, line 3, read *Tæmâ* instead of *Tæmâ*.
- „ 176, line 26, read ḥazama instead of ḥ—.
- „ 176, line 28, read ḥizâm instead of ḥ—.
- „ 198, line 9, read *whimper* instead of *whisper*.
- „ 204, line 5, insert *as* after *though*.
- „ 220, line 26, read לְצַב instead of לְצִבִּי.
- „ 221, line 8, read מִי דָּבָר instead of דָּבָר מִי.
- „ 256, heading, read xxxiii. instead of xxiii.



# ON THE PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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## II. YESAYA AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

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### 2. YESAYA.

*In* IN Yesaya we see prophetic literature, at the time when it most flourished, attain its highest summit; everything combined to raise him to this height, to which neither an earlier prophet as author could climb nor a later could again soar. Of the other prophets, all the more celebrated ones were distinguished by some special excellence and peculiar power, whether of speech or of deed; in Yesaya all the powers and all the beauties of prophetic speech and deed combine to form a symmetrical whole; he is distinguished less by any special excellence than by the symmetry and the perfection of all his powers. And as amongst all the older literary prophets he was manifestly the most productive and most successful in his public work, in speaking and writing, so there have been preserved far more of his writings, partly entire and partly fragmentary, than of any other of that series of prophets.

I. We cannot help supposing that Yesaya possessed, as the first condition of his peculiar historical greatness, a native power and animation of mind rarely possessed even by prophets. There are rarely combined in the same mind, the profoundest prophetic emotion and purest feeling, the most unwearied, successful and consistent activity amid all the confusions and changes of life, and lastly, that true poetic ease and beauty of style, combined with force and irresistible power; yet this triad of powers we find realized in Yesaya as in no

other prophet; and we must infer from the evident traces of the constant co-operation of these three powers that the measure of the original endowments of his mind was very great. We further see him constantly located at the centre of the kingdom of Yuda, in Jerusalem itself, in close relations too with the royal house, and entrusted with the most important public affairs; and we understand how he, more than many other prophets, could turn his prophetic eye in all directions from this most favourable although most onerous position, and could collect in wide survey all the spiritual relations of the age. Finally, his activity was not of brief duration, nor was it confined to his later years, nor restricted to little events, but through a long life, which was devoted purely to the prophetic impulses of his spirit, and which at the same time fell in the midst of the most important world-events, continued, unchanged, and increased in inward power and outward means, by the changes of fortunes, the length of years, and the magnitude of events. But to all this must be added that his life falls exactly in the period when all prophecy, as well as all literature, could be most freely and perfectly cultivated. Thus everything combined to make of Yesaya the greatest prophet of those centuries, whose work has also been immortalized for all succeeding ages in his own writings. He occupies as prophet no less than as author that calm sunny height, which a specially favoured mind takes possession of at the right time in every ancient literature, a height which seems to wait for him, and, when he has come and risen to it, seems to maintain and guard him to the end without intermission as its proper occupier. It is true, Yesaya would have been impossible without Yôél and other great predecessors; he follows them, and actively carries on their work: but just as the inmost power of his mind is not dependent on his predecessors, and he found much to dare and bear, so he stands above them in his position after he has assumed it, and exhibits a spiritual activity beyond which no successor could go in later times. Everywhere Yesaya makes himself known as the regal prophet,

in his thoughts, the matter of his orations, and the style of his expression.

1. In thought Yesaya always hits the truth in its greatest purity, and not only hits it, but also presents it boldly with pointed severity and victorious force; and his thoughts turn not only upon the highest affairs of the kingdom, the nations, and his entire age, but also upon the eternal hope of the divine kingdom upon earth. It is not necessary to show this here in each single case; the exposition of the particular passages will subsequently supply this: a few of the more general phenomena of this kind, however, must be elucidated now.

When Yesaya arose, there prevailed in Jerusalem pretty generally the notion, with which Yôél has made us familiar, of the special advantages of the holy city; and during the long reign of 'Uzzia, which was externally successful, it had become in the case of the magnates of the land an indolent security, a proud trust in the indestructibility of their own good fortune, and an idle, luxurious enjoyment of life. 'Amôs, and to a certain extent Hoséa, had spoken against this false trust, but they lived far from Jerusalem, and it is hardly likely that their voices had produced great effect upon the proud capital. So far as we know, Yesaya is the first who in the midst of the capital laid bare almost all the popular opinions and dangerous errors of this kind in their radical perversity, and destroyed them with irresistible power; and this long before the Assyrians threatened the kingdom of Yuda, ii. 2, v. 30; no subsequent prophet resisted so powerfully as he every form of human arrogance, nor pointed so over-poweringly to things inviolable and eternal.

When subsequently, under Hizqia, the foreign religions, and all kinds of superstition which had been tolerated or even favoured by previous kings, received no further protection, and the ancient Yahvé religion was more firmly adhered to by high and low, Yesaya's exertions had already obtained their first victory, and his mind might then have rested according to the common view. But, on the contrary, he now perceives with a

clear incorruptible glance the dangers of a religion of hypocrisy and eye-service commended by authority, which under the appearance of serving the Highest with all assiduity and devotion only hides its carnal aims, and instead of giving itself up purely to the attractions of the pure spirit, less and less understands and follows it. In this respect, his utterances have a lasting import for all times and places where a higher spiritual religion has indeed fortunately public authority, but on account of this public authority, is constantly in danger of not being spiritually enough received, i. 11-17; xxix. 13, 14.

But although his keen glance thus recognises on all hands the large amount of vanity there is in human pursuits, and pierces through the great hidden deficiencies,—although on this account the baselessness of the existing relations, with the consequent necessity of an early general destruction, irresistibly forces itself upon his gaze when he looks into the veiled future, however mournful the picture may be,—he yet holds unchangeably fast by the eternal hope, and knows how much there is of good in the community of Yahvé which will approve itself by every sharp trial. Two truths especially cast a light for him into the darkness of the future, even in the most gloomy times: the one, that prosperity and salvation can be found in Yahvé alone, salvation for those who seek Him alone, prosperity without measure or end; the other, that only a remnant, indeed, a small, proved few of the community, can be preserved from the impending storms and trials, this few, however, being certainly and necessarily the basis of a new, reformed community, because in Yahvé's community there is an indestructible germ of good: two truths which 'Amôs and Hoséa had uttered, but which Yesaya was the first to exhibit with great power and decisiveness and to make the condition of his whole work, while they never left him without consolation and invigoration; he had even deposited them as an imperishable symbol in his own name *Yesaya* (*Yahvé's is salvation*), and in his son's name *Sheâr Yashûb* (*the remnant will be converted*), vii. 3; viii. 18, comp. viii. 13, sq.; xxxi.



1-6; vi. 11-13; xxviii. 5; x. 20-22; xi. 11, 16 (iv. 3). In the region of these forebodings and truths, there was, however, one conception, which the previous prophets had left untouched and consigned to him, and in which therefore he was able to show himself most original and independent. This was the precise idea as to the proper form which the longed for time of the purified and reformed future could alone assume. And in this respect the exalted regal mind of this prophet of Jerusalem was exhibited in its most illustrious light. He who from his own regal mind knew what unlimited power might be given to the individual soul to influence *many* and to inspire *all*, who besides saw daily in Jerusalem the traces of the former activity of a great mind like David,—he could conceive the future elevation of the community no otherwise than as sustained by *one* divine ruler. If, in fact, every spiritual elevation and awakening must proceed from the clearness and constancy of one exalted spirit, that was still more the case with that highest elevation which was longed for and striven for by ancient Israel; in the certainty that an individual was to be expected, the desire became distinct without losing itself in vague aberrations; in the idea of what an unlimitedly powerful spirit this individual must be, the desire found repose without falling into precipitation and impatience. Thus the Messianic desire necessarily assumed at last this form: but Yesaya was the first to arrive at it, and to give it the right shape. His happiest hope rests in the certainty, that this sure personal centre of the better future would not fail to appear; and his foreboding desire luxuriates in the pictures of his necessary greatness and exaltation; in foreboding desire he traces his character from his childhood through all the stages of his unique life up to the last; he beholds in him the true government and the fulfilment of all noble human endeavour; and he can surmise nothing beyond him save Yahvé and the consummation of his kingdom. But although Yesaya is the true author of this highest development of all divine hopes, even in his writings we can trace a growth in his manner of conceiving

them: the oldest oration, ii. 2-5, 30; ix. 7—x. 4, contains nothing of the final conception of the Messianic king, whilst in the brief indications, vii. 14; viii. 10; ix. 5, sq., it appears as already known, but is expressed at length most powerfully and perfectly, xi. 1—5, 10, comp. xxxii. 1, sq. The contemporary and fellow countrymen of Yesaya, the author of Zakh. ix. and his junior Mikha, follow in this respect almost entirely the greater prophet, and after that time this special form, which the divine hopes had assumed, is never entirely lost.

Yesaya repeats the view of the earlier prophets concerning the Heathen, that their calamities must serve to make them look to the true God as the only real saviour. But he adds to this view its glorious consummation, by the happy presentiment which he expressed in the evening of his life, that after the conversion of the Heathen there would be no external difference at all between them and Israel, and no advantage would be possessed by these before those, but the same blessing will rest upon them all, xix. 18-25; an exalted view which stands almost solitary in the Old Testament.

With what sacred feelings he had looked upon the whole prophetic mission from the first, and still looked upon it, he explains in an introductory piece, ch. vi., with wonderful clearness and force, as no other prophet has done.

2. While no thought is too high or too far off for him, neither is there any phenomenon of his age which lies beyond the range of his eye, or is too difficult for the strength of his prophetic arm, every topic of prophetic discourse and teaching being commanded by him from his regal position; as a watchful, far-seeing, guard and watchman of his age, and standing as it were in the centre of the Hebrew world and of genuine religion (xxi. 11, sq.), his eye takes in and commands from his position everything that can provoke a prophet to speech and action, and there is nothing that escapes the truth of his thought or the weight of his words. His discourses comprehend the most varied topics, and yet they always issue from the same fundamental truth which inspires him. He contends

with the false prophets and magicians of every kind; but as with men who are far beneath the true prophetic dignity, and to silence whom a few words suffice, ii. 6; viii. 19: but if prophets, priests, and magnates, professing to worship Yahvé, tread the Temple with unholy feelings and behaviour, then he contends against them with every strongest weapon, and mercilessly strips them of all their false attire, i. 10-23; xxix. 9-14. He is content to present the divine truth, and when he has spoken what was necessary, he withdraws, calmly confident that the future will attest his words, viii. 16-18; xxx. 8: but when in place of the needful seriousness and collectedness in Yahvé, which he as a prophet had demanded, the people abandons itself to wild joy, as if to silence conscience, nothing then restrains him from speaking with the greater emphasis and severity, xxii. 1-14; or when a powerful party in the kingdom, from cowardice or embarrassment, will hide their crooked views and mischievous plans, precisely from him, because he was feared as the mouth of Yahvé, in reality therefore from Yahvé himself, he then searches the more inevitably into the secret which they wish to hide, places it before their eyes in all its pitiable-ness, and, without sparing, hurls all their pernicious purposes to the ground with terrible force, ch. xxviii.—xxxii. He overlooks no injustice in the realm, however and by whomsoever it may be committed, and directs his threatening words, when it is necessary, against the magnates and princes of the kingdom, priests and laymen, who by transgressions of various kinds continued to increase the evils of the kingdom and the sufferings of the people; indeed he directs his threats quite personally against one of the powerful friends of the king, xxii. 15, sq.; nor does the reigning Davidic king stand too high for his divine word, he announces to him the truth even against his will and quite publicly, vii. 3-17, comp. iii. 12, but nevertheless would much rather work with him as dispenser of divine consolation and deliverance, ch. xxxvii.—xxxviii.; but, again, he does not spare, for instance, the ruler who in other respects willingly hears his words, but observes all his deeds with equal

watchfulness, without preference as well as without enmity, and holds before him also the truthful mirror of evil foreboding as to the consequences, *e.g.* of pride and ambition in the midst of success, which is shown by the narrative, ch. xxxix., important in this respect although not intrinsically so. But while he speaks against the powerful without fear or hesitancy, moved purely by the divine truth, not less does he raise the weight of his words against everything that is perverse and ungodly in the great mass of the people, and in no case takes the side of the people against the legitimate reigning family when this is in danger, viii. 6, 11, sq. And lastly, he observes, not merely the internal affairs of the kingdom, he has an equally watchful eye for foreign affairs, and surveys the fortunes and destinies of all nations as far as his prophetic eye ranges; neither in this wide region can anything escape his clear spirit: whether it be the contact of such a nation with the inhabitants of Jerusalem, while this contact is very distant and is conceived by only the fewest as just barely possible, v. 26-30; or should an important question of this kind be immediately engaging the attention of the nation, xviii. 1-7. And in all cases he judges correctly with respect to foreign nations also and their relation to the Hebrews and the Yahvé-religion; but if a foreign people has become unendurably insolent and cruel, he does not shrink from raising his indignant word and his forebodings of evil against it, even should it stand threateningly and with superior force in the midst of the land, x. 5-34; xxxvii. 22-35, and elsewhere. Thus as a true spiritual ruler he exercises his mastery over all subjects by the power of his thoughts and his public speech, and everything that is weak and perverse in the age vainly strives to hide itself from his invincible power. It is only by his observing the favourite custom of giving an external sign in addition to the truth that there is still observable in Yesaya also the marks of an age which was not yet prepared for the highest conceivable perfection of prophetic activity.

3. Lastly, his style everywhere bears the same impress of a regal mastery of his matter. It cannot be said that it is



strictly speaking elaborated and artistic, it bears a lofty simplicity and unconcern for outward charms, and resigns itself freely to the guidance and requirement of each thought: but everywhere it rolls onward in a full overwhelming stream, and always accomplishes its purpose at the right point with simple means.

It is of itself significant that Yesaya almost wholly dispenses with the usual marks of the poetic style, *e.g.* the suffix *יָמוּ*, the negative *בֹּל*, and the like (xxx. 5; xxxii. 10): he does not need them, his style has sufficient poetic elevation and beauty. It is quite otherwise with the pieces of his contemporaries, which have been received into the same book, ch. xxiii. xxxiii., comp. xvi. 4 *a*. It may be accepted as an exegetical law, that in all cases the simpler expression answers best to the thought of this prophet, since he never seeks his power in single words and detached adornment; a law of decisive importance in several passages, *e.g.* xiv. 30. Similarly he does not make such frequent use of plays upon the thoughts and words as other prophets, *e.g.* xv. 1-9; xvi. 7-12; Mic. ch. i., not to mention later prophets: his paronomasiæ are rare, but in all cases the more telling, surprising the hearer with great entire thoughts in the briefest form, v. 7; i. 23; xxx. 7, 16; xxxii. 19; x. 30, sq.

Yesaya always conducts and unfolds the thought of his discourses in an elevated and sublime manner; he accomplishes much with a few brief words, which, however, are always transparent and easily understood; at the right moment he collects and moderates with a firm hand an overflowing impetuous wealth of thought, which might easily lose itself in the undefined; and without becoming prolix he thoroughly exhausts and finishes everything he handles. This strict collectedness is most admirable in shorter oracles, which consisting of briefly projected pictures and thoughts give rise to foreboding without end, while they are yet presented in a complete and clear form, as viii. 6—ix. 6; xiv. 29-32; xviii. 1-7; whilst at most in the long

piece ch. xxviii.—xxxii., the style flags here and there for the moment to rise immediately with all the greater force. With this compressed wealth of thought and style, a comparison is rarely detached for the purpose of explaining and completing it by itself, xxx. 13, sq. ; xxxi. 4, 5 : usually it forces its way forthwith into the midst of the exposition of a matter, and is closely interwoven with it, in fact, often one simile upon another : and yet the many threads of discourse, which for the moment are confused, are always soon reduced to perfect transparency again ; which is a special peculiarity of this prophet, a freedom of which he alone is master.—Similarly the structure of his verse is always full and yet firmly defined : but in this our prophet does not make it a matter of great importance to weigh his words with the scrupulousness of an artist ; not infrequently he repeats the same word in two members, xxxi. 8 ; xxxii. 17 ; xi. 5 ; xix. 13, as if with his great inner power and beauty he less needed a scrupulous perfection of the exterior. The structure of his strophes is always easy and well-rounded.

But the thing of chief importance is, that we are wholly unable to name a special peculiarity and favourite manner of style in the case of Yesaya, as we find in the case of other prophets. He is not the specially lyric, or the specially elegiac, or the specially rhetorical and monitory prophet, as, for instance, Yôél, Hoséa, Mikha, in whose writings a special manner is predominant : but every kind of style and every variation of exposition is at his command to meet the requirements of his subject : and this it is which in respect of style constitutes his greatness, as well as generally one of his most prominent excellences. His fundamental peculiarity is only the exalted majestic repose of style, proceeding from the full and sure command of his subject. This repose by no means requires that the language should never be more violently agitated and not blaze up where the subject requires it, with greater vehemence coming home to the hearer : but even the most extreme agitation which here and there occurs is bridled by

this repose in the back-ground, and does not pass beyond its proper limits, and soon returns with higher self-mastery to its regular flow, not again to leave it, ii. 9—iii. 1 ; xxviii. 11-23 ; xxix. 9-14. And just as little does this composure of style require that the subject shall be handled in the same smooth way without variation of delivery : on the contrary, Yesaya is a master in these variations which are recommended by the relation the hearers sustain to the thought : if he wishes to bring right home to his hearers a truth which lies beyond common minds and is unwillingly heard, and prove it to them by their own confessions, he resorts to popular instances from common life, v. 1-6 ; xxviii. 23-29 : if he wishes to call the attention of the overwise to a new truth and future prospect, he surprises them with a brief oracle, clothed in the form of an enigma, in order to leave its solution to their acuteness, vii. 14-16 ; xxix. 1-8 ; if the unhappy remediless state of his hearers' minds leads to nothing but grief, his language becomes for a while a lyric of moaning and lamentation, i. 21-23 ; xxii. 4, sq. ; if the infatuated guides of the nation mock, he surpasses them with their own weapons, and lays them low with the terrible seriousness of divine irony, xxviii. 10-13 ; also an incidental ironical word slips from the prophet with his superior vision, xvii. 3 *b* : thus his style exhibits every variation, it is tender and severe, instructive and minatory, mournful and then joyous with divine joy, sarcastic and serious, but it always returns at the right moment to its original elevation and repose, and never loses the ingrained fundamental characteristic of divine seriousness. Exhortation and correction is never painfully striven for and produced : but a brief, sharp word of admonition after the discussion of a matter produces a more telling effect, i. 16, sq. ; xxviii. 22, an appeal apparently incidentally flowing from the subject is more convincing and powerful, ii. 22 ; xxxi. 6.

The pre-eminent literary greatness of Yesaya is also exhibited in the fact, that he is not less capable of appreciating the best pieces of earlier prophets, and receives some of them

more or less altered into his own productions at fitting places, ch. xv. sq. ; xxi. 11, sq. ; xiii., sq. In his case this is no mark of the unproductiveness of his own mind, but rather an unenvious acknowledgment which he paid to the writings of prophets of even an earlier age, and a sign of his learning and taste.

II. It may be expected that the entire life of this prophet will have corresponded to this elevation of his mind, and the traces which we are able to discern fully confirm the expectation.

We know no other prophet in whose case his entire life was all along so closely connected with his prophetic calling, and who in return reacted so powerfully upon the life of the whole community. He does not separate himself from full intercourse with the nation and politics, like Elia and Elisha, as a hermit, or as head of a mere school, but on the contrary continues as a citizen of his city and father of a family in the midst of the commotions and temptations of the wider and the narrower world, making, however, himself and his whole house living representatives and witnesses of the higher truths which animate his mind, as if it were by no means sufficient merely to proclaim them with his mouth. When his mind is filled with any great thought, it is as if his spirit urged him to coin the thought into a short, clear name, and to call himself, or one of his new-born children, by this name, in order that the thought itself might continue to exist, and take even firmer root, and thus all the members of his house appear as living symbols and memorials of the prophetic truths, vii. 3 ; viii. 3, sq., 18 ; not without a significance of this kind is his wife also called the prophetess simply, viii. 3. Or he enshrines a thought of this kind, which does not immediately strike his contemporaries, in an enduring name or in a brief formula, and writes it as an eternal memorial and a witness for the future upon a public tablet, viii. 1, sq. ; xxx. 8. Thus in all cases the eternal truths take the form of lasting and distinct forms in his mind, which he cannot confine



to his own breast, but casts them into the midst of life, that the world may recognise and retain them.

It is a similar consequence of his intensely energetic action upon the world, that he delights to give a *sign*, *i.e.* some external guarantee for his words, and a *prognostic* or a kind of visible indication of the future, whether it is asked for or not, for the purpose of drawing the resisting world the more powerfully to faith; see further, vii. 11, sq.; xx. 3; comp. xxxviii. 7, sq., 22 (a more particular explanation of the latter instance of a special kind belonging to the historical books). Even when a sign of this kind cannot immediately appear, and so produce faith, he nevertheless promises it to promote the clearness and certainty of his discourse, vii. 14; xxxvii. 30, just as generally he delights in clear divine signs and witnesses of the truth, and gladly mentions them, xix. 20. Here also Yesaya is in all cases the man of action, who not only bears the future in his own spirit, but himself begins it, and hastens it as it were with divine action, conducting the world as by higher power to the knowledge of its truths, whether it will or not. Although, on the other hand, it is mournful when an age requires such external proofs.

How Yesaya stood in awe of no human power, and was then least to be alarmed when the greatest efforts were made to restrain him, has already been remarked, but should be especially remembered in this connexion.

Inasmuch as he thus powerfully influenced the life of the whole kingdom, it could not but be that times of great critical moment should come, when the weal or woe of the whole community depended upon his insight and firmness, and when his true power gained the opportunity of manifesting its real greatness. Such times were, *e. g.* those of the Syro-Ephráimitish war against Jerusalem, when he had to fight against the king Ahaz and his house, against false prophets, against the whole nation, and when, finding that the king would not hear him, he still in the midst of general confusion defended with the most

wonderful steadfastness and distinctness the eternal truths against all, vii. 1—ix. 6 ; then those of the last movements of the Assyrians and their attack upon Jerusalem, when he never lost for a single moment his exalted presence of mind, and both spoke openly against the Assyrians, and inspired the people with new courage, pointing always to the source of true help alone, x. 4 —xi. 16 ; xvii. 12—xviii. 7 ; xiv. 24-27 ; ch. xxxvi. and xxxvii.

But if in the momentous and critical moments of the age, and in the great affairs of the kingdom itself, he not only continued unchanged, but then first unfolded his greatest and most uncommon energies and evinced himself as the genuine man of the divine spirit, it followed that gradually his reputation and the confidence placed in him must have grown in the whole nation, and before his death he would see some of the happy fruits of such a life. And as a fact we can with certainty gather this from the few fragments of his history. At first he must certainly have had for a long time to contend with great difficulties, with persecution and public threats, so that at times he had to fight against despair, vi. 9-13 ; viii. 11-20, a condition which from xxix. 11, we may consider to have lasted until the commencement of the reign of Hisqia. But in the course of the reign of this king, we see him rise to that high stage of public confidence, both with the king and the people, the extent of which may be estimated by the narrative of ch. xxxvi.—xxxix. And it may be said that all that higher tone and greater prosperity which mark the reign of Hisqia, as well as the victory over the Assyrians in Yuda, is his work, and that thus in his advanced years, revered as the true protector of the whole community, he witnessed a new moral elevation of the nation, and himself enjoyed a portion of the happy repose for which in earlier years he had long wished in vain in the midst of severe struggles. The last piece of his which has been preserved, ch. xix., breathes at its close a wonderfully happy repose, the unique glimpse of a mind as it were already in glory.

It follows plainly from viii. 11—13, 16, that a more intimate circle of disciples and friends also gradually collected about him; indeed, everything indicates that in ch. xxiii. and xxxiii. we have pieces preserved from his disciples which were received into his book, just as manifestly Mikha, one of his junior contemporaries, appears to have been aroused to the prophetic work by his example.

III. That a prophet of this character would make great use of his pen to influence men and to consign to the future memorials of his truths as witnesses, must be supposed from his whole character and actions, and is proved by certain intimations by himself, viii. 1, 16; xxx. 8; that in this his disciples were of great service to him, follows from viii. 16. Indeed, we can discover in these passages, that his written productions were of a double nature: for the nation at large he often wrote single memorial sentences, or names, upon a publicly exhibited tablet in great characters, viii. 1; xxx. 8 *a*, comp. Hab. ii. 2; while for those to whom the reading of learned books was more familiar, he wrote his longer discourses in books properly speaking, xxx. 8 *b*; viii. 16, comp. the books xxix. 11, sq., 18: and it is evident that the records of the latter class only have been preserved to us. It is not only in itself probable but can be concluded with certainty from the passages quoted, that he did not merely take up his pen once or twice in his long prophetic life, but as often as ever the importance of his matter and the time itself urged him to make records.

We might therefore suppose that all the oracles of his which have been preserved were written down as soon as they had been orally delivered, and that after a time a larger book gradually grew out of a collection of them. Nevertheless, a number of indications do not altogether confirm this supposition. It may be justly objected to this view, that oracles concerning foreign nations, such as xiv. 29-32; ch. xv., sq.; xxi. 11, sq., 13-17, were hardly first spoken and then put into writing, and that such short pieces as most of them are could not be very well com-

mitted to writing singly but only in a larger book with many other pieces. It is, however, certain from the historical notes with which several pieces are introduced, that at least such pieces can have been written down only a considerable time after the oral oration was made, vi. 1 ; vii. 1 ; xiv. 28 ; xx. 1-3 ; the oration, ch. i., although in its historical basis it belongs to a pretty late period, and must have been committed to writing much later than many other pieces, manifestly professes to be a kind of general preface and introduction to a collection of several separate oracles.

We must therefore suppose that Yesaya's writings were of two kinds. He might publish single pieces soon after he had orally spoken upon the subjects with which they deal ; and of this class are plainly the two largest pieces which we possess in the present book, ii. 2—v. 30, together with ix. 7—x. 4, the oldest piece from Yesaya's hand, and the piece, ch. xxviii.—xxxii., from a considerably later time ; each of these two larger pieces shows that it is a separate production, which might have been originally published by itself just as well as the books of 'Amôs and Mikha, which are not much larger ; and in neither of these two longer pieces is there a historical word added which might indicate that each was written soon after the oral delivery. But he will not have immediately written down in this manner everything that he as a prophet said or did or thought ; and after he had worked for a long time the resolve might arise in his mind to collect in a larger, more historically planned, book all his prophetic oracles, acts and thoughts, including those which had never yet been recorded ; and of course the pieces which had been previously published separately might be received into a collection of this kind. That Yesaya's literary efforts took this form also, we have at least one proof in the instance of one larger collected work : this is also the work which, according to all indications, he wrote at the commencement of the reign of Hisqia. For the piece, ch. i., which must have stood at the head of a larger book of this



kind as a prologue worthy of it, falls in this period as to its historical contents; the historical notes, which further all betray the same hand, bring us beyond the death of Ahaz, vi. 1; vii. 1; xiv. 28; and the short oracles concerning foreign nations, which could moreover find a place only in a larger work of this kind, belong with respect to their historical basis also to this time. From the last years of 'Uzzia, when he came forward as prophet, to the death of Ahaz, Yesaya had already worked long enough as prophet to bring together into a larger book his entire previous work; and although the tone of his mind at that time, as immediately appears in the first piece which he placed after ch. i., in the recollection of the moment of his call, ch. vi., was generally full of dark forebodings after such bitter experiences and in a time which threatened such severe and general ruin, yet the new reign of Hisqia promised a better future, so that a hortative reference to his past experiences and a severe lesson for the future was quite reasonable; the longer book would thus indicate the boundary line of two important periods of time, and very probably greatly aided the reformation which began under Hisqia.

Accordingly by carefully examining every detail and slowly advancing from step to step, we may venture the attempt to restore the original form of the larger book just mentioned from the scattered pieces of the present book. Such an attempt would seem indeed to be wrecked on the fact that a very considerable number of Yesayanic pieces according to all appearances have been lost. We might suppose this as something very probable: but there are the most distinct evidences of it. No one who is closely acquainted with Yesaya's characteristics and has carefully examined the important piece, vii. 1—ix. 6, will be able to deny that acc. vii. 3; viii. 18, the names of the prophet himself, and his son Sheâr-Yashûb likewise, must have been explained in earlier pieces, and probably, considering their high significance, much more at length than we at present find is the case with his other son, viii. 3, sq.; the explanation of

the name Yesaya in its higher sense probably followed immediately after ch. vi., and that of his son's name, Sheâr-Yashûb, must likewise have gone before, and therewith some of the greatest prophetic truths must have found their explanation. And since the oldest written piece, ii. 2—v. 30; ix. 7—x. 4, says nothing at all about a Messiah, while the piece, vii. 1—ix. 6, in reality presupposes this idea, which was as new as it was important, we have every reason to suppose that the very piece in which this truth first appeared has been lost.

Nevertheless so many and such varied literary productions of Yesaya's own pen have been preserved, that we need not despair of forming firm conceptions as to the various ages, the order of succession, and the plan and art of his separate writings, if we only correctly discover and apply all the means of proof which are at our disposal. The result of all these careful enquiries is, that Yesaya, as far as we can now see, published books not less than seven times during the course of his long prophetic career; and if these have not all been completely preserved, we still possess, in the book that bears his name, far more literary remains of his than of any other prophet before Yéremyá. It is now necessary to make ourselves acquainted with these books separately and in the order of their succession.\*

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### I. THE OLDEST BOOK OF YESAYA'S.

Ch. ii. 2—v. 25; ix. 7—x. 4; v. 26-30.

These pieces belong to one great oration, as appears from the combined evidence; the piece, ch. ix. 7—x. 4, especially must originally have had its place before v. 26, since it is intelligible there alone,† although in a certain respect it is easily separable.

\* Comp. the essay in the *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.* vii. p. 28-53.

† As was said as early as 1837 in the third number of the *Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*; although there the insertion before v. 25 was accepted, which is less suitable.

The discourse belongs to the time when the Assyrians had long made the Northern kingdom tributary, but otherwise had not appeared as conquerors in Palestine, and were looked upon, in Yuda especially, as very distant and little known nations, whose future appearance for the correction of the two weak kingdoms was surmised by the prophet only, v. 26-30. In Samaria, to which the oration once specially turns aside, ix. 7-20, the king Pégach began to divert the internal disunion and lawlessness into forays against Yuda in order at the same time to strengthen his exhausted kingdom in this way, ix. 9, 20; and we see from 2 Kings xv. 37 that these attacks had begun even under Yotham, although for a long time they were certainly confined to the border fortresses and adjoining lands of Yuda, and did not threaten Jerusalem until a later period, vii. 1. In Jerusalem itself the weak king Ahaz, who, acc. 2 Kings xvi. 2 was but twenty years of age, had then just ascended the throne, since the words

“ My people’s rulers are a child  
and women rule over it,”

only poetically divide into two members the short sentence, “ *my people’s rulers are a child* (i.e., a youthful, unwise king) *and women* in the palace;” and Ahaz was not simply young when he became king, but very weak and unmanly, as he is generally known to us, so that these words, as far as they permitted an allusion, could point to him alone.

At this time Jerusalem was in almost undisturbed possession of the same high prosperity and proud security to which it had become accustomed under the previous kings who had been powerful as regards the surrounding nations. The repose and the power of the kingdom of Yuda, the conquest of Ailah, on the Red Sea, by Uzzia, 2 Kings xiv. 22; xvi. 6, and especially the prudence of the previous kings, had favoured the intercourse of trade, and the whole land had become uncommonly rich and prosperous, ii. 7; besides, the ancient prophetic promises of a future still higher prosperity of Jerusalem, as

Yôél, *e.g.* had proclaimed them, could be boasted of. But the extended intercourse with foreigners had also brought with it a great deal of foreign superstition, idolatry, and many frivolous manners, ii. 6-8, 18; the rapidly increasing wealth and the security of the land had been productive of pride, luxury, and light-mindedness, and the women especially, who in any kingdom indicate the measure of morality, were spoilt by luxury and high life, iii. 16—iv. 1; the injustice too of the powerful in the kingdom, the corruption of the judges, and the persecution of the inhabitants who could not help themselves, these evils which had long lain hidden, were promoted most seriously by the weakness of the young king, iii. 12-15; v. 1, sq.; x. 1-4. In reference to the great dangers which lay in this apparently prosperous and secure state of things, the prophet had long ago spoken under the previous kings, and called attention to the operation of Yahvé which was bringing all these things to a great judgment; but his warning words had been ridiculed by the proud, careless, and to some extent insolent people, v. 18-21; iii. 8, sq.; people considered themselves in Jerusalem as powerful and secure under the protection of the peace existing between the Assyrians and themselves and the external worship of Yahvé. It was in presence of the most recent and serious dangers of the kingdom that the prophetic zeal of Yesaya was kindled, whose eye penetrated through the hollowness of these brilliant externalities: with tremendous force he pointed to the certainty and necessity of a higher judgment before which all human arrogance must grow pale, ii. 9-11, 12-22; iii. 16; v. 15, sq.; ix. 8, and evidently laboured precisely at this period of the commencement of a new reign in Yuda with the greatest energy. At the opening of a new reign the most varied efforts and hopes naturally wake up with an uncommon vigour; and a multitude of indications show to us that the prophets, whenever this was possible, were more active than usual at such times, which were so critical for the maintenance and prosperity of the kingdom. While Yesaya was



certainly at that period most active in public affairs, he also resolved at the same time to labour by his pen for the first time in his life; and thus this book originated, which according to all the evidence is his oldest, and in which he might, with a skilful hand, include much that he had publicly spoken at an earlier period during the first sixteen or seventeen years of his prophetic life. But it is easy to note in the whole tone and in the overwhelming vehemence of this oration how certainly it dates from the earliest years of the most powerful of all prophets.

At that time the ancient and exalted belief of the inviolability of their city still possessed the minds of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; in fact, up to that time, external calamities had rarely befallen the proud city and brought her to reflection: this is the first written oration, not delivered incidentally and far from the capital, as in the case of 'Amôs and Hoséa, but in its midst by its own prophet, in which the entire persuasion with respect to the city's safety receives a crushing blow, and it is clearly announced, that the entire kingdom must decline and the capital be destroyed, the possibility of which was then presented in the distance by the Assyrians, at least to the unclouded eye of the prophet. This is the true state of the case, and therein lies the subject-matter and purport of this long and powerful oration, which is also planned with great art and upon a large scale in order to exhaust the subject. That the judgment of Yahvé will come, that it must come before the ancient promises with respect to the blessed times of Jerusalem can be fulfilled,—this is the first and most important position which the prophet has to prove, and in the delineation of which he can at first scarcely express himself in calm words, from painful indignation at the infatuated arrogance of the time, ii. 2—iv. 6. After a brief pause he then, as in an entirely different frame of mind to which he had brought himself, begins to shew the necessity of the judgment according to the confessions of the men themselves who were aimed at in his

oration, v. 1-24, which in the first part of his oration he was prevented from showing by his overpowering feeling; and in the last part he casts a few additional glances, retrospective and circumspective, including Samaria also, in order to return to the fundamental truth of a great impending judgment. The whole oration, therefore, falls into three smaller ones, the style of which grows increasingly calmer and more self-possessed.

1. *A judgment precedes the blessed time!* ch. ii. 2—iv. 6.

The blessed time promised by earlier prophets will indeed come, but not before a severe judgment of all haughty men who have fallen away from Yahvé! This thought is unfolded in six somewhat lengthy strophes, of which the last only is observably shorter and more rapid. At the head Yesaya places one of the sublimest and most beautiful descriptions of the blessed age from an earlier prophet (see under Yôél above, vol. I. p. 114), to the certain hope of which he holds as fast as any one, and in the image of which the nation as it now is may mirror itself: but, alas, how far distant from it is this proud Israel of to-day, against which Yahvé must rather be angry, which must creep away to hide itself from his alarming approach to judgment! ii. 2-11. Thus in the very first strophe the oration which began so sweetly passes over into the raging storm of terrible threatening, and the next three strophes, ii. 12—iii. 15, starting from this elevation, to which the discourse has so suddenly soared, picture with somewhat more calmness, but all along in high-running waves of language, this judgment-day thus alarmingly announced, the second showing *that* it is coming, the third, *how* it comes, the fourth indicating *wherefore* it comes, entering somewhat more circumstantially into its causes; these three strophes are more closely connected with each other as the amplification of the leading thought, and all begin with the amplifying particle כִּי, *for*. Then, after the fifth, iii. 16—iv. 1, has directed a similar threat against the haughty women especially, the ora-

tion closes with the sixth iv. 2-6, which recurs to the opening thought, that the blessed time will come with its full glory after such a general and severe judgment.

## II. 1.

2 “And then at the end of the days the mountain of the house of Yahvé will be placed upon the top of the mountains, and be exalted before hills | that all the Heathen may flow into it; || and many nations will go and say ‘Come! let us ascend to the mountain of Yahvé, to the house of the God of Yaqob, | that he may teach us of his ways, and we may walk in his paths!’ | for from Ssion will go forth the doctrine, and Yahvé’s word from Jerusalem. || Then he judgeth between the Heathen, and giveth decision to many nations: | and they will forge their swords into hoes, and their spears into pruning-knives, | nation against nation will not raise the sword, and not learn war any more.” ||

5 House of Yaqob! | come and let us walk in the light of Yahvé! || —But thou hast cast off thy people the house of Yaqob, because they are full of soothsaying and augury like the Philistines, | and like the children of strangers conjure, || and his land was filled with silver and gold, so that there is no end to his treasures, | and his land was filled with horses, so that there is no end to his chariots, || and his land was filled with idols, | to the work of their hands they do homage, to that their fingers have made! || —Then men sink and

the man falleth down, | and forgive them not! || —  
 10 Enter into the rock and hide thee in the dust |  
 before Yahvé's terror fleeing and the splendour of  
 his majesty! || The haughty eyes of mankind are  
 cast down, and men's pride sinketh, | and Yahvé  
 alone is exalted on that day! ||

## 2.

For a day hath Yahvé of hosts upon everything  
 proud and high, | and upon everything exalted that  
 it should bow down, || and upon all cedars of  
 Libanon the high and the exalted | and upon all  
 the oaks of Bashan, || and upon all the high moun-  
 15 tains | and upon all the exalted hills, || and upon  
 every prominent tower | and upon every defenced  
 wall, || and upon all the Tarshish-ships, | and upon  
 all watch-towers of delight; || so that man's  
 haughtiness sinketh and men's pride boweth, |  
 and Yahvé is exalted alone on that day. || —But  
 the idols they will wholly abandon; || and  
 [people] will enter into rock-caverns and dust-holes  
 fleeing before Yahvé's terrors | and before the splen-  
 dour of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake the  
 20 earth. || —On that day men will cast their silver  
 idols and their golden idols, which they made  
 them to do homage to, to the moles and to the  
 bats, || in order to enter into the clefts of the  
 rocks and into the rents of the chasms | before  
 Yahvé's terrors fleeing and before the splendour of  
 his majesty, when he ariseth to shake the earth. ||  
 O cease ye from man in whose nostrils is a breath: |  
 for in what is he to be considered? ||



## III.

## 3.

1 For behold the Lord Yahvé of Hosts removeth  
from Jerusalem and from Yuda staff and stay, |  
every staff of bread and every staff of water, ||  
hero and man-of-war, | judge and prophet, sooth-  
sayer and elder, || the captain of fifty and the man of  
repute, | and counsellor and wizard and magician, ||  
and I make children to be their princes | and baby-  
5 boys shall rule over them. || Then the nation is  
in strife man against man and neighbour against  
neighbour, | they are in confusion—the boy against  
the old-man and the base against the honourable: ||  
when one taketh hold of the other in his father's  
house: “a garment hast thou, chief shalt thou be  
to us | and these ruins shall be under thy hand!” ||  
—he will begin on that day thus: “I will be no  
binder-up, since in my house is no bread and no  
garment, | ye shall not appoint me a chief of the  
people!” ||

## 4.

10 For Jerusalem stumbleth and Yuda falleth, |  
because their tongue and their deeds are against  
Yahvé, to provoke the eyes of his majesty; || the  
hardness of their countenance witnessed against  
them, and their sin they revealed like Sodóm un-  
disguisedly: | woe to their soul, for to themselves  
they did evil! || Say of the righteous to him it is  
well, | for the fruit of their deeds they will enjoy; ||  
woe, to the unrighteous it is evil, | for the device of  
his hands will be repaid him! || —My people's com-

manders are a child, and women rule over it; | my people—thy guides are misleaders, and the way of thy paths they have spoilt. || There standeth Yahvé to contend | and ariseth to judge nations! || Yahvé will enter into judgment with his people's elders and princes | “and ye have fed off the vineyard, the sufferers' spoil is in your houses?” ||  
 15 “For what do ye tread upon my people, and grind the sufferers' face?” | saith the Lord Yahvé of Hosts. ||

## 5.

And Yahvé said :

Because the daughters of Ssion have become haughty and walk with necks held up and rolling eyes, | tripping tripping they walk and tinkle with their anklets: || so the Lord maketh scabby the crown of the daughters of Ssion, | and Yahvé will make bare their shame. || On that day the Lord will remove the adornment of the anklets and of the little suns and moons, || of the ear-drops and of  
 20 the necklaces and of the fine veils, || of the coronets and of the bracelets and of the girdles, and of the smelling-bottles and of the amulets, || and of the finger- and nose-rings, || of the holiday-garments and of the fine robes, and of the fine mantles and of the pockets, || of the gauzes and of the shifts, and of the head-bands and of the great veils ; || and then—instead of sweet-smell there will be putrefaction, and instead of the girdle a cord, | and instead of artificial curling baldness, and instead of

the breadth of a mantle girding of sackcloth | a  
 brand instead of beauty ! ||—Thy men (Ssion!) will  
 fall by the sword, | and thy troops by the war : ||  
 25 and—her gates sigh and moan, | and emptied she  
 IV. will sit on the ground. || Then seven women lay hold  
 1 of one man on that day saying “ Our own bread  
 we will eat and clothe ourselves with our own  
 clothing : | only let thy name be called over us,  
 take away our disgrace!” ||

## 6.

On that day Yahvé's shoot will be for adornment  
 and honour | and the land's fruit for pride and for  
 ornament | to the remnant of Israel. || And then—  
 whoever is left in Ssion and remaineth in Jerusalem  
 will be called holy, | every one who is written down  
 to have life in Jerusalem. || —When the Lord will  
 wash away the filth of the daughters of Ssion and  
 purify Jerusalem's blood-guiltiness out of its midst |  
 5 by the spirit of right and the spirit of fire, || then  
 Yahvé createth over the whole space of the moun-  
 tain of Ssion and over its festive assembly | cloud  
 by day and smoke, and the gleam of flaming fire  
 by night : | for over every majesty is a canopy ; ||  
 and it will be a tabernacle for shade by day from  
 heat, || and for refuge and for protection from tem-  
 pest and from rain.||

1. The detached passage, vv. 2-4, must have been borrowed  
 from the close of an ancient oracle. When the true religion  
 and doctrine (that of Ssion) shall be recognised and desired by  
 all nations, which must at length be the case (at the end of the

days), and which is here, ver. 3 *b*, merely introduced in a parenthesis as a well-established truth, then Ssion, which is at present so small, will as it were be pre-eminent above all mountains, and be visible from afar as the holy mountain of all nations (comp. on Ps. xlviii. 3 ; lxviii. 17), so that the most distant Heathen make pilgrimages to it, that they also there may receive from the true God teaching and guidance in life ; and he who can best teach and judge will also actually establish amongst them reconciliation and peace, so that then there comes the beautiful age when universal peace prevails, as is more fully amplified in the passage, Mic. iv. 5, to its close.—Yesaya then, ver. 5, makes a rapid transition to his own words, with the appeal to Israel to walk with him in the light of Yahvé, to submit itself to the enlightening and teaching of Yahvé, who has given them such great promises, and to listen further to his voice as the prophet will explain to them, Ps. xxxvi. 10.

But when Yesaya would prefer immediately to connect his own cheering promises with those, he is overcome by the painful feeling of how far he is from being able to do this at once, since the nation has precisely at this moment departed so far from Yahvé ; and turning his face with inexpressible pain from the people to whom he had just intended to speak face to face, and turning to Yahvé, he exclaims : but thou hast rejected thy people Yaqob, because it is full of quite other things than thy fear, and appears to be wholly unable in its pride to get enough of godless things ! vv. 6-8. It is full of foreign, un-Mosaic superstitions, customs, and usages, such as magicians, idol-priests, and adventurers teach, comp. below, iii. 3, sq. : viii. 19 ; full of treasures gained by wealthy trade, but, alas, only urged by an immoderate desire for wealth, like Tyre for instance, and has become luxurious thereby, Zakh. ix. 3, sq. ; full of horses and chariots for war, whereby it imagines it has made itself secure, comp. above on Hos. xiv. 4 ; full, lastly, of what is most disgraceful for Israel—of idols ! But by such means, by proud pursuit of all these ungodly things, and again by such

homage to idols, man lowers himself, becomes unworthy to appear before Yahvé, and to belong to his people; but as if this with wonderful rapidity had suddenly dawned with overwhelming force upon the prophet's mind (and this judgment must come necessarily suddenly, and is already as good as certain), there is an involuntary transition in the prophet's language, ver. 9, and he exclaims aloud, how certainly men will fall under the divine judgment and need hope for no forgiveness! vv. 11, 17; v. 15, sq.—But now the prophet, who had just turned his face in the deepest grief from the people and had spoken only to God, turns his face immediately to the people again, as it were under the irresistible power of divine certainty which he had just received, and as in a voice of thunder, ver. 10, sq., calls, as if seized not so much by the consuming fire of the most righteous indignation as by compassion, to *men* and the human element in Israel which has gone so much astray, and which has nevertheless so blindly lifted itself up against the divine will: Away with thee! creep into rocks and dust before Yahvé, who is coming to judgment in his terrible majesty! Human pride must bow, divine truth alone avail at the day of judgment.

This very first strophe is an exceedingly good illustration of the marvellous power and overwhelming force of Yesaya's style. No oration can begin more calmly than this and give fewer indications at the commencement of the storm with which it will close. The prophet appears before an assembly of the people, perhaps on a Sabbath, with the book of Yôél's prophecies, which at that early period was certainly generally held in high estimation; he reads from it an attractive passage, flattering to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and wishes to be allowed to speak further upon this passage which concerns the glorification of Israel and Jerusalem. But he is scarcely beginning actually to speak to the assembled people, his eye has hardly wandered over the Israel which stands before him, this people which claims to be Yahvé's people, when he can see



nothing before him but a multitude of conjurers, of gold and silver, of horses, of idols; the mouth which was on the point of speaking of the Messianic prosperity is closed, and turning his face and his words to God he is able only with stifled sobs to complain over this nation which is now necessarily rejected before Him, vv. 6-8. But just at this moment he is suddenly overpowered by a vision of the divine irrecoverableness of this nation; an irrecoverableness necessarily growing out of such a condition as he beholds the people in, and by the dreadful power over the people of the curse which he cannot restrain, ver. 9: so that, as if the spirit still more strongly impelled him between these two fires of the most terrible contraries to ward off from the nation the horrible thing which threatens it, he turns his face towards it again, and, like one who will address a final monitory word to a condemned criminal, he calls to the nation which is threatened by the rage of the last divine judgment, and yet proudly turned against God, only quickly to deliver itself, to bow down in the dust before the glory which approaches to punish! ver. 10. How entirely different from the beginning is the close of this strophe, and what rapid transitions of experience and feeling occur during its course! A whole life-drama lies here between the beginning and the end; the change cannot be more marked and rapid, and at the same time more necessary than it is here. But Yesaya has seized the mind of the people with irresistible power and carried it to the point he desired: they are astonished, they tremble, but he is able the more quietly to begin the discussion and proof of what he has to say.—In this way we must rediscover the entire sense of everything in this strophe, even the smallest detail, to be able correctly to appreciate not only it but also all that follows.

2. There is no doubt but *that* the judgment-day of Yahvé will come, as little as that then the haughtiness of all those men who confide in idols will be brought low: thus the last words of the previous strophe, which were almost too rapid and



alarming, are here further and more calmly explained, the discourse ending three times in a re-echo of the former strophe, that then their pride will be laid low and their confidence in the idols miserably creep away, as if, notwithstanding the greater calmness, the thunder of the ending of the first strophe was still heard reverberating in gradually diminishing waves of sound. (1.) vv. 12-17, Yahvé has a day upon every high and proud thing on the earth so that it may bow, nothing on earth being too high for him and his day of judgment: and if the storm of Yahvé, as he comes to judgment in tempest and earthquake, drives destructively over all the giant trees of Lebanon and Bashan, mountains and hills, towers and high fortress-walls, over the tall ships sailing to Tarshîsh, Ps. xlviii. 8, and the lofty watch-towers of pleasures, how can weak, puny man then continue in his defiance and pride?—(2.) ver. 18, sq.: But the idols, which were mentioned just before, will then be all abandoned, inasmuch as they whom the idols ought but will be unable to assist run to hide themselves; for—(3.) vv. 20-22, at first indeed their worshippers, in their flight from the judge who is coming in the earthquake, wish to take these beautiful images with them, but soon in their hurry and alarm cast them away in the first corner that offers, where filthy, disgusting animals may creep over and house among them, so that getting rid of their gods they may only save themselves ('Amôs iv. 3; Hos. x. 8). When it is seen how easily even the proudest man falls, how, after all, the life of even the most powerful and most defiant of men hangs only upon a weak puff of air, a breath, over which he himself has no power, how can confidence be placed in him! ver. 22.

3. It was not for no purpose that the exclamation was made at the end of the previous strophe, that it was time to cease to trust in mortal men instead of in Yahvé alone; for those men whom the misguided nation at present follows, may indeed be the rulers of the existing kingdom, but if an enquiry is made as to the manner, the *how*, of the approach of the judgment,

it will appear that this forms one chief element of it, that precisely the existing rulers of every class, all the various supports of the kingdom and its government, must especially fall under the approaching judgment (a powerful conqueror leading them away captive, v. 26, sq.) so that then, when the most necessary upholders of government have been removed, the most dreadful disorder and corruption, society reduced to an internecine battle, the end of the existing order of things, will be produced amidst the ruins of the nation and the state, as is described very graphically, vv. 4-7, probably in accordance with the experience of the Northern kingdom, which was present to the mind of the prophet. All the various supports of the kingdom and government (the authorities as many prefer now to call them,) will be removed, military and civil, the counsellors of the prince and those of the people, the officers and those otherwise most looked up to, the genuine and the false prophets; but it must be allowed that the latter are much the more numerous and varied, and it is precisely they whom the misled people trust, the idol-prophets (soothsayers) and magicians, with magic arts or magic words; as is significantly expressly mentioned just at the end of the enumerations, ver. 2, sq., comp. viii. 19. And yet this staff and this stay, *i.e.* all these supports of various kinds, although to a certain extent they were very bad, are the *necessary* supports of the kingdom, without which the kingdom and its citizens cannot *live*, its bread and its water, ver. 1, Ez. iv. 16; v. 16: when therefore they have been removed, *e.g.* by being taken into captivity, the most terrible anarchy must commence, when in incessant internal feuds, oppression, and uproar, only the most reckless and daring for a moment obtain power, ver. 4, sq., and when a well intentioned citizen in vain (privately in the house of his father, for publicly it could no longer be done) asks a man whose outward appearance has still some promise of uprightness, to take the command of this falling, ruined house, the kingdom. *Binder-up*, uniter, ver. 7, one who will hold

together what has fallen into ruins, adjuster, subduer, Job xxxiv. 17.

4. The kingdom falls into ruins, as was just said, *because* it suffers inequality and unrighteousness in the nation, ver. 14, sq., to grow, and always so wickedly repulsed the prophets which rebuked it: but then it was not so much these men who were mocked as God, and his judgment comes notwithstanding, although men make no secret of their perverse speech and action, revolting with a brazen face against Yahvé and the truth, as if it were their purpose to vex the majesty of the Allwise and Allseeing! In the consideration of such perversity, which must necessarily bring its own punishment ultimately, the prophet's discourse is seized by a grief hard to control, and proclaiming the simple laws of eternal righteousness and retribution, it resolves itself into mourning over those who are thus blinded, who in their unrighteousness only injure themselves, vv. 9 b—11. But after a brief pause the prophet collects himself and rises from this sympathetic sorrow with irrepressible force against the chief originators of such mournful perversity, the leaders and rulers themselves, presenting, ver. 12, an overwhelming threat and a description of the true judge, how He is at hand to contend with them as well as with the whole world (*nations*, ver. 13, like Ps. vii. 9; lvii. 6, 12), how He in anger accuses them in broken almost uncontrolled language (Ps. ii. 6) of having destroyed the beautiful vineyard they were appointed to keep, v. 1-7, and calls them to a strict account, *wherefore* they trod down *his* people (this vineyard) and even repulsed and ground the face of the sufferers seeking help, vv. 13-15? In this strophe which thus alternates between contemplation, mourning and threatening, there is manifest, just as at the end of all these three more closely connected ones, an uncommon power of language, and the progressive threat, irresistible to a degree, of the last verse most effectively ends the strophe. The further delineation of the sins of the magnates is deferred to the second main section. What, however,

5. has to be said with respect to the wives of these magnates, who are in their way so luxurious, is immediately briefly summarized, ver. 16, sq. Their luxurious haughtiness must be punished by a corresponding humiliation, losing their husbands in the war, they will sink into the lowest misery, or even be violated by their barbarous conquerors.—This is then delineated in detail, how, robbed of all the objects of their pride by the plundering enemy, vv. 18-23, they will sink into the most pitiable outward condition, ver. 24; how when the young men of the city shall have fallen in disastrous battle, and the whole of the city shall be prostrate with grief, old men and women and children will publicly lament and wail at the gates, *i. e.* in the market-places, ver. 25, sq. (Job ii. 13), these women, who were once in such luxury, will then in vain seek a husband as protection and in outward honour of the marriage state, iv. 1 (1 Cor. vii. 36). How voluptuous these women are is shown by this long catalogue of the articles of their toilet, vv. 18-23, although we need not suppose that they were all, as they are here enumerated, worn at the same time by one woman. However, in this long list of all possible trinkets, the order is observed that their anklets are first mentioned because they had been already referred to in the general description, ver. 16; costly foot-clasps and little foot-chains are intended, with which they trip along in short steps, liking to make a jingling sound to attract attention (Ibn-Khacan, p. 36. 3; 47. 4, comp. p. 122, 162, Journ. as. 1842, I. p. 449, Urvaci dram., p. 48. 8). This description of the adornment of the feet is followed by that of the fine ornaments of the head and the other parts of the body, the transition being made, ver. 22, sq., to the larger materials and coverings of the body. But instead of sweet scents which float around them, there will then be the smell of putrefaction from the multitude of corpses; instead of the beautiful girdle a cord round the body for leading them away as slaves (comp. xxiii. 10); further, instead of beautifully frizzled hair, baldness; instead of the breadth of a costly mantle, the confined girdling of sack-



cloth about the naked body, both the baldness and the sackcloth being the signs of mourning for the death of their husbands and other brave men in the war; finally, a brand, as it is imprinted on slaves, instead of their beautifully preserved faces.

6. When therefore, concludes the last strophe briefly, and as if gladly reverting to the blessed end in view, such a judgment has come, or as is said, ver. 4, supplying an omission, when Yahvé shall have washed away the moral impurity of those sinfully adorned women, and shall have removed the blood-drops of those unjustly murdered, whose blood, acc. iii. 14, sq., cleaves to the magnates of Jerusalem, effecting both by a spirit which is at the same time righteously judicial and irresistibly powerful, destroying all that is evil with purifying fire (i. 25; vi. 13; Matt. iii. 11)—when this has taken place, and not till then, the promised blessed age will come, of which that ancient prophet speaks, ii. 2-4, which no one can long to see more than Yesaya, and which he now describes in a few exalted pictures after his own manner. But it is only gradually that his thought and language rise again to that height of prophetic vision with which he began, ii. 2-4: accordingly he says the Messianic age will come—(1) iv. 2, when, in the estimation of the purified and reformed Israel, which has not been carried off by the judgment, not foreign people and things as at present, ii. 6, sq.; iii. 2, sq., 18, sq., but the marvellous wealth and fruitfulness of their own land, which Yahvé then causes to sprout forth, will constitute their adornment and pride (comp. v. 6, 10; xxviii. 5; xxx. 23, sq.; Joel iv. 18; Amos ix. 13; Hos. ii. 23, sq.; xiv. 8;—(2) ver. 3, when every individual of that remnant, that is, as many of them as have been previously called by the eternal divine grace to life in the new Jerusalem (for it lies in the idea of this grace that if not all yet some actually attain to that life, Joel iii. 5; Ez. xxxii. 32; Apoc. iii. 5; xx. 12), will be holy, and acknowledged and extolled as such.—But if the divine prosperity is thus in beautiful harmony both outwardly, ver. 2, and inwardly, ver. 3, then comes—(3), vv. 4-6

naturally the external exaltation also, inasmuch as at last the place, which is thus august and glorious on account of the true holiness dwelling within it, is also a place distinguished for the protection and peace which it affords its inhabitants, as if the Mosaic ark of covenant were placed there for ever, with its pillar of cloud and fire (acc. Num. ix. 15-23 ; Ex. xxxiii. 7-11 ; xl. 34, sq.) ; as indeed always, even in modern and humbler things, it is the case, that wherever there is true spiritual exaltation and majesty, should it be only that of a king, *e.g.* of the present day, then there is around it a covering and a protection, a nimbus, which keeps the world away from it. But at the very commencement of the description of the third and highest stage, the prophet cannot sufficiently emphasize, ver. 4, the main condition under which the Messianic consummation is alone possible, as it was explained above.

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How little the words ii. 2-4, whether in Yesaya or in Mikha, are original, may also be seen from the fact, that each passage presents about an equal number of readings which are scarcely original. In Mikha we have the better reading עַמִּים instead of כָּל הַגּוֹיִם, v. 2, as agreeing better with vv. 3 and 4 ; in ver. 4 also the first two small members, especially when we consider the beautiful structure of the members in Yôél, are more correct in Mikha, and it is likewise certainly better to read יִשְׂרָאֵל instead of יִשְׂרָאֵל comp. iii. 5. On the other hand, the addition *afar off* after *numerous nations* in Mikh. ver. 3, (here ver. 4,) is redundant, and rather spoils the structure of the verse.

It cannot be doubted that כִּי, ii. 6, in a connexion of this kind can express an antithesis, acc. § 354 *a*. At first sight the first words, ver. 6, may appear to mean, *thou hast cast off thy nation*, = *thy nationality*, *O house of Israel!* But further consideration shows that this gives no sense here. That God is addressed, appears also from ver. 9 ; and the change of person addressed in ver. 5 and ver. 6, is not more surprising than that in ver. 9 and ver. 10.—The following words only make any



real difficulty. If the reading were correct, we should have to understand them thus: *they are full from the East and practise magic like the Philistines*, as if *עֲנִיִּים* were a participle, and it was intended that the Philistines dwelling in the south-west should form the antithesis to the Easterns, and both clauses should only say, that conjurers of all kinds had poured in upon Israel *from all quarters of the world*. But the sentence, *they are full from the East*, would be too indefinite; in that case we should at least have to suppose that *הָקָסִים* or *הָקָסִים*, acc. to iii. 2, had dropped out before *מִקְדָּם*: *they are full of soothsaying from the East*. But since *עֲנִיִּים*, acc. § 179 a, can denote *augury*, the sense of the first part of the verse is most easily recovered by reading *מִקְדָּם*, Ez. xii. 24; xxiii. 7, instead of *מִקְדָּם*. The last words might be understood as, *and of children of strangers they have abundance*, comp. *דָּסַף* to flow, Job xx. 22, with *סִפַּח* to pour, and with reference to *פָּ* Ps. lxxxviii. 4: in which case a corresponding idea would be found for that of *fulness* in the first member, and the foreigners would be specially such men as those who are intended, viii. 19; xxii. 16. But since two kinds of superstition are mentioned, it is more probable the *pouring in* signifies the superstition of being able to prophesy by means of a cup consecrated by an idol priest, pouring water and wine into it, and observing the mixture, an art which, acc. Gen. xlv. 5, was once highly esteemed in Egypt and considered as a privilege of priests and kings, and may have spread at this time into Palestine, amongst the populace even. If we further read with many MSS. *פִּילְדֵי* instead of *פִּילְדֵי*, this member amply corresponds with the first, and three kinds of superstition are here distinguished, just as in iii. 2, sq., both passages placing *soothsaying* at the head.

Similarly the words, ii. 9, are in themselves difficult: but if an accurate comparison is made with the corresponding passages it appears nothing is here referred to but the righteous humiliation of the haughtiness, and that the words are so brief only because the whole language is here strained to the highest

pitch. *Men* (Germ. *Mensch*) and *man* (Germ. *Munn*) denote here, as Ps. xlix. 3, as antithesis the entire race of mankind, the low and the high. The verb *יִשֶׁה* is accordingly in its prophetic force clear, § 342 c.

On ii. 16. In this connexion the obscure combination *שְׂכִיּוֹת הַחֲמָדָה* manifestly denotes something comparable with the highest ships in height; and we may compare the Chald. *שְׂכִינְתָא*, *watch-tower*, properly *specula*, from *שָׁכַח*, *to look*, and then suppose places of outlook, or towers, built in gardens for pleasure, for which meaning exactly similar passages may be quoted, xxiii. 13; xxxii. 12 and 14; Ez. xxvi. 12. A less probable conjecture is idols, (*מִשְׁכָּבִית* Lev. xxvi. 1; Num. xxxiii. 52,) of wicked pleasure, i. 29; xlv. 9, namely, high statues, obelisks and the like, to which the wicked passions of the people were then attached; so that yet another idolatrous object would be named here at the close.

If *יִחַלֶּה* ii. 18, means *to pass away*, the sentence must be constructed according to the rare manner, § 308: *the idols—everything of them will pass away*. But neither is this construction here quite clear, nor is the sense it yields quite suitable in this connexion. It is much better to take *חָלַף* after the analogy of Arab. *khalf* as *to leave behind*, abandon, in flight to leave them lying; the change from the singular to the plural, vv. 18 and 19, in general discourse is not surprising, and *פָּלִיל* is thus easily understood. If this signification *to leave behind* is established, we may with greatest certainty understand *בְּנֵי חָלֹף* Prov. xxxi. 8, as people *abandoned* of their elders and all other men, and as in that sense miserable.—On *לַחֲפֹר פְּרוֹת*, ver. 20, see § 157 c; comp. also Layard's *Discoveries*, p. 307, sq.

The double gender of *staff* and *stay*, iii. 1, is only intended to make the thought more general, acc. § 172 c: the addition *every staff of bread and every staff of water*, generalizes it in a similar way in the midst of its nearer definition, this addition including all the supports without which that which is here alone intended, the kingdom, cannot live or last. If the meaning

of the words, ver. 1, was up to this point doubtful, it is made sufficiently clear by the long enumeration of the individuals; and in this enumeration nothing is more remarkable than that the long list twice ends, as if intentionally, with the promoters of superstition, just as Yesaya had from the first, ii. 6, mentioned these principally as the promoters of the national misery: the *prophet*, who might be a true one, is immediately followed by the *soothsayer*, and at the end bringing up the train appear the *magician with enchantments* and the *magician with spells*. The two latter betray their Syrian origin by their names, just as קסם does, whilst Syr. *luchosho* (Lag. anal. p. 47, 6), occurs in the simple meaning *whispering*, the *master* of the חֲרָשִׁים arts (in the sense of magical arts) answers exactly to Syr. *charōshō* (Knös. chrest. p. 39. 6; 50, 5); and originally the distinction between the two must have been that the latter endeavoured to accomplish everything by manual enchantments and the former by verbal. But we cannot help seeing that the enumeration of these eleven kinds of national supports does not form a very perfect series, especially as the *Elder* stands too isolated at the end of ver. 2; and since the LXX. begin with γίγαντα καὶ ἰσχύοντα a better series is recovered if we, (1) introduce such a word as נְעִיזִי according to Is. xliii. 17, after גְּבוּרִי, so that three kinds of warriors come before all the rest: *Gibbors* first, as in ancient times (*Hist. of Israel*, iii. p. 139, (iii. p. 189, sq.), next *Mighty-men*, by whom probably *horsemen* are intended, acc. ii. 6. and other *soldiers*; then we have, (2) *judge and prophet and soothsayer*, a trias similarly; thereupon, (3) the *Elders*, i.e. representatives of the people, (see *Alterth.* p. 328, sq. (284, sq.), and *Hist. of Israel*, iii. p. 11, (iii. p. 17,) *captains* and other *men of repute* not in office; finally, (4) appear royal *counsellors*, *magicians*, and *enchanters*. The LXX. in their time read also נְשִׂיךְ.—But it is equally remarkable that Yesaya should again rank all these twelve classes together, ver. 14, as *Elders and Princes*, i.e. representatives of the people and officials, not sparing the former in the least.—As to תַּעֲלִילִים iii. 4, comp. 167 b.

הַחֲבֵרָה iii. 9, with this punctuation is most likely derived from חֲבֵר with the meaning *their partiality*. But this sense does not harmonise with ver. 8, sq., where the open insolence of their words and deeds is described in general as a witness against them; accordingly חֲבֵר, Job xix. 3, should be compared.—*The way of thy paths*, iii. 12, the way in which thou must move and act, the course of thy life.—At iii. 13, as at ii. 9, a divine vision comes upon the prophet: the meaning of which he expounds more calmly, ver. 14.

The possibility of *And Yahve said*, iii. 16, is explained, Vol. I. p. 77.

The word מְשַׁקְרֹת iii. 16, which occurs here only, at first sight might be derived from the Aramaic *sekar*, which with *shēkar* is related to the Hebrew שָׁקַר *a lie* and means *fucus*, it would then have to be taken with the Targum as the favourite black colouring for the eyes. But this comparatively innocent adorning or painting of the eyes is represented quite differently Ez. xxiii. 40; 2 Kings ix. 30; Jer. iv. 30; the primary meaning of Arab. *shukra* (Abulf. *ann.* ii. p. 70. 1) rather points to the sense *redden*; and in this place it is only the ostentatious, insolent and lascivious walking and bearing of these women which is described. It is better therefore to take this word as meaning *to make the eyes spring*, leap, causing them to roll wantonly, from the Aramaic שָׁקַר as the same as שָׁקַר; comp. the *Jahrbb. der Bibl. Wiss.* vii. p. 33.

On iii. 18-23. The correct understanding of several of the difficult names of these articles of attire is greatly aided by observing the order in which they follow, and the whole meaning of the context. Thus at the commencement שְׁבִיסִים cannot mean *hair-braids*, LXX. ἐμπλόκια, 1 Pet. iii. 3, although such artificial hair-dressing is mentioned, ver. 24; for that is not an adornment which belongs to this series and which the enemy could plunder; the word, probably borrowed from Arabian tribes, is therefore, like the following, a diminutive for שְׁמִים, acc. § 167 a, and the small, *i.e.* golden suns and crescents, (comp. John



Wilson's *Lands of the Bible*, ii. p. 337,) might be fastened to the hair or hang from the breast, while the scent bottles and amulets were probably half hid in the bosom. פָּאֵר ver. 20, comp. Isa. lxi. 10, must be a handsome, probably golden, head-dress, a kind of diadem, quite different from the high and wide head-wrap of some kind of cloth, צִנִּיף ver. 23. And that גְּלִיז is not a hand-mirror, as the Vulgate has it, is shown by its position; it is therefore a fine transparent material, Arab. *jalwa*, according to the LXX. Further, the long series of things is here as little as above, iii. 2, sq., without an evident arrangement: and it is easy to see that at first three objects are always taken together, until in the fourth set they are fittingly extended to four, whilst in the case of the large ornaments, ver. 22, sq., two fours follow. The accents must be corrected accordingly.

iii. 24, the word הַגִּדָּה is used instead of קֶשֶׁת ver. 20, since the same word is not repeated without reason.—On מִצְעָה see § 287 *h*.—פְּתִיגִיל must necessarily (since no word of such a formation exists) be written as two words, as is also shown by the analogy of the two corresponding words, *the breadth of a mantle*, inasmuch as גִּיל like Syr. *gallō* and *gullētho* from the same root גָּלַל (to roll, to wrap) can denote a *broad mantle*, answering to the garments named, ver. 22.

The fresh and more powerful re-commencement, iii. 25, in the midst of the strophe is made very suitably with the appeal to Ssion; but the level of ordinary discourse is immediately resumed, ver. 26, inasmuch as the future after all is the great object of attention.

הִדִּיחַ iv. 4, has nothing to do with דָּחָה *to cast forth*, but interchanges in the root with לִיחַ and accordingly answers to the German *klären*, and English *purify*; comp. *Lehrbuch der Heb. Sprache*, p. 132 of the 7th ed.

iv. 6, הַיְּמִיּה is most correctly referred to Ssion, ver. 5. And since *daily* cannot here form an antithesis to *night*, it equals *any day* like Ps. xiii. 3; as the Turkish *gün-de*.

2. *The self-condemnation, figuratively and literally*, v. 1-24.

But in this manner the first discourse has presented the stern judge and threatening God merely in all his righteous burning indignation; and in the rapid course of the threatening oration the causes of the punishments threatened were rather rapidly indicated than particularly recounted, iii. 8-16. Is not all this a too violent and inconsiderate judgment? But just as a supposed truth, if it is in reality one, can be proved from the most various points of view, so in this case the whole manner of the discourse suddenly changes, and a new note is struck to show that it is not only Yahvé who condemns the community, but that it condemns itself equally. And just as a higher truth confident of the justice of its cause, may assume another form for a moment, so even the God and judge here puts on another character; he becomes a simple tender and owner of a vineyard, who can sing a lamentation over the unfruitfulness and ingratitude of his vineyard which had received such peculiar attention, a lamentation which his younger friend and relative, the prophet, had heard from him and now repeats as he had heard it to the community, in order that the community may be judge as to what a vine-dresser who had been thus deceived ought to do to his vineyard. The answer cannot be doubtful; but the judges have scarcely condemned in thought the unthankful vineyard, when they must see that they have condemned themselves thereby; for as was already indicated, iii. 14, the community, the community which for a long time had been laboriously cultivated by Yahvé, is in reality this vineyard, so carefully tended by its owner, with which he is so righteously angry. Thus the illustration of the self-condemnation of the criminal passes very quickly into a literal description, He appearing in his majesty who had just laid aside his character of judge and God; just as the judge when the sentence has been briefly pronounced then goes into particulars in an intricate case, so this judge has only too many details to



enumerate; and without suffering a single suspicion of the unrighteousness of his judgment and his punishment to arise, he enumerates all their manifold transgressions and the particular punishments which necessarily correspond to them with sufficient circumstantiality. He has to complain, (1) of their unrighteousness and covetousness, (2) of their giddy luxuriousness and rioting, (3) of their indifference to the good and true, which is over and above all these transgressions; whence arise three strophes, the bantering illustration having been prefixed as an introduction to this seriousness. But since the transgressions of the community for so long a period have become increasingly various and serious, insomuch that if they were to be enumerated in detail, the flood of them would grow in volume with the progress of the discourse, their condemnation does here in fact pour itself forth with growing breadth in three strophes, each successive strophe becoming thus involuntarily longer than the former one, increasing from four to six, and from six to seven verses, or from a half gradually to a whole strophe. This however is on the supposition that ver. 17 is restored to its original position after ver. 10, where from all indications it belongs in point of meaning.

## V.

1 Let me now sing of my dear friend,\* as my friend singeth of his vineyard!

A vineyard had my dear friend  
upon a richly fruitful height,  
And he digged it over and picked it clean,  
and planted it with best vines,  
and built a tower in its midst,

\* The German is : *von meinem lieben vetter singen wie mein oheim singt*. In English this is less permissible : *vetter* and *oheim* having a narrower meaning in our language than in the German.—Trs.

hewed out also a wine-press in it,  
and waited that it should bear grapes—  
but it bore sour grapes!

And now, inhabitant of Jerusalem and man of Yuda! | judge then between me and between my vineyard! || what is to be done more to my vineyard and I have not done it in it? | wherefore did I wait that it should bear grapes—yet it bore sour grapes? ||—Therefore let me show you what I will  
5 do to my vineyard : | remove its hedge so that it serveth for grazing, tear down its wall so that it serveth for trampling! || and I will make a desolation of it, so that it shall not be pruned and not hoed, and groweth up into thorn and thistle, | and upon the clouds I will lay command not to rain upon it one rain! || — — For the vineyard of Yahvé of Hosts is the house of Israel, the man of Yuda his darling planting, | and he waited for right—but behold might, for exactness—but behold exaction! ||

# 1.

O those who join house to house, and connect field to field, | until there is no more room and ye alone must dwell in the midst of the land! || —in mine ears Yahvé of Hosts whispereth: | Verily many houses will become a desolation, grand and  
10 fair without an inhabitant! || for ten yoke of vineyard will yield one bucket, | and a quarter's seed will yield a bushel; || and lambs feed then where they are led, | and the fat-ones' ruins kids will devour. ||

## 2.

O those who rise early in the morning to follow the wassail, | late into the twilight are heated by wine, || so that guitar and harp, tambourine and flute and wine is their revel, | without considering the operation of Yahvé, or at all seeing the work of his hands ! || —Therefore my people wandereth forth unawares, | whilst its nobility is spent with hunger, its revel-rout dried up with thirst. || Therefore hell enlargeth her greed, and openeth her mouth beyond measure, | so that there descendeth her [Ssion's] splendour and her revel-rout, and  
 15 her uproar and what is merry in her. || Then man sinketh down and the man is humbled, | and the eyes of the proud are bent down ; || and then Yahvé of Hosts will be exalted by the judgment, | and the holy God hallowed by righteousness. ||

## 3.

O they who draw guilt near with cords of vanity | and sin as with cart-ropes, || they who say “let his work hasten let it speed that we may see it, | and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw near  
 20 and come that we may know it!” || O they who call evil good, and good evil, | taking darkness for light and light for darkness, taking bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter ! || O they who are wise in their own eyes, | and intelligent before their own faces ! || O they who are heroes—to drink wine, | and men of might—to mix wassail, || who justify the unjust for a bribe, | and take away the righteousness of

the righteous from them ! || —therefore as the fire's tongue devoureth stubble, and blazing hay sinketh down, | so their root will be like rottenness, and their blossom ascend like dust, || because they despised the doctrine of Yahvé of Hosts, and rejected the word of the Holy One of Israel. ||

v. 1-7. In the structure of the Parable it should be specially noted, how insensibly and easily the matter itself is unfolded from the figure, while the point aimed at would have been reached too circuitously and slowly if both had been kept separate from beginning to end. The whole discourse observes the method of gradually bringing into light what was at first concealed under the figure, until at last the matter itself stands alone before the surprised hearer. (1) Ver. 1, sq. The discourse commences apparently with something quite foreign to the prophet's aim, taken from common life, and accordingly also assumes an entirely different tone, becoming a ballad, as if the prophet wished merely to repeat after a friend a lamentation which he had heard him sing concerning a strange misfortune. The vineyard was from the first in such a condition that it could produce noble fruit, it was then so carefully cultivated and protected by its possessor that with a well-founded expectation of his harvest he had already built a wine-press—and still it deceived his hope of good fruit and bore bitter grapes!—(2) Ver. 3, sq. If the hearers have been moved by this mournful story, they are now unexpectedly surprised by the question of the owner himself, as to how in their candid judgment he ought to proceed with this unthankful vineyard. And since they are silent, therefore cannot take the defendant under their protection, the owner immediately proceeds—(3) ver. 5, sq., to announce the righteous punishments which he will inflict ; but if in doing this he at first names only the usual punishments which even a human owner might inflict to chastise as it were an ungrateful vineyard, at last he mentions a means which very

quickly leads the hearers to surmise who this is that is speaking, and who will no longer conceal himself: the stoppage of all rain points to Yahvé! And that all further doubt may cease, the discourse—(4) ver. 7, intentionally breaks through its assumed disguise and with terrible seriousness presents the naked truth intended, the incisiveness of some paronomasiæ strengthening the prodigious effect of the rapid conclusion.

1. After the discourse has thus soared from its humble and gentle commencement to this extreme height and vehemence, it remains during the course of the three following strophes upon this height, but with greater calmness and self-possession, for the purpose of exercising the right, which it has thus vindicated, of sentencing the individual transgressions. The first transgression, and the root of all the rest, which was before mentioned first, ver. 7, is unrighteousness, the forsaking of eternal right, born of selfishness and covetousness. By unrighteous means they seek, wherever it is possible, to get all the houses and fields of the whole land; the fools, who act as if they desired ultimately to dwell alone in the wide depopulated land! But, like a higher voice ringing in his ears, the prophet hears that, as a fitting punishment, the many beautiful houses, on the possession of which they stake their soul's salvation, shall stand desolate, on account of a great barrenness of the land, depicted by the examples, ver. 10, which is the counterpart of the sign of the blessed age first mentioned, iv. 2; so that at last a waste heap of ruins will be found, upon which sheep will be driven at the will of their owners, ver. 17, where now these covetous people revel as fat epicures. The meaning of this description of these people who covetously acquire *latifundia* appears fully only from a knowledge of the ancient Mosaic agrarian constitution, which was then breaking up, comp. *Alterthümer*, p. 236, sq. (202, sq.).

2. For even such covetous people like to live luxuriously and spend the whole day in revels of drunkenness and frivolous trifling, whilst they never observe how Yahvé continues eter-



nally his work, not less when men do not heed him, the work of eternal government and of that righteousness which often develops itself in secret, but manifests itself without fail at the proper moment, and which punishes the frivolity of these men : ver. 11, sq., comp. Amos v. 23 ; vi. 5, sq. ; and with respect to the *work* of Yahvé, xxviii. 21 ; Ps. xxviii. 5 ; xc. 16 ; Hab. iii. 2. The corresponding punishment for this is, that just as they live from day to day without thought, so the destruction of the kingdom itself and the banishment especially of the more powerful among them, shall come upon them unawares, when what there is in the nation of nobility and revelry, *i. e.* precisely those of highest repute and the most noisy, who at present riot in shameful uproar, perish in the bitterest want, ver. 13 ; or rather, ver. 14, that hell suddenly opens her jaws to swallow altogether the wild uproar of Ssion, as the ancient legend narrates of similar punishments, Num. xvi. 32, sq.,—a terrible judgment but a necessary one, by which the pride of men will again be bent, and Yahvé clearly acknowledged in his true greatness and sanctity, as is observed at the end of this strophe, ver. 15, sq., with most telling emphasis, the discourse ending once more in exactly the same language as above towards the end of the strophes, ii., 9, 11, 17, 21.

3. A third great transgression consists in their resistance to the good and true, when it approaches them and will force itself upon them, *e. g.* by these very prophets of Yahvé : if the prophets speak, as was indicated in the previous strophe, ver. 12, of the work and counsel of Yahvé, *i. e.* of his judgment, which if it has not been made manifest, nevertheless rests in his eternal counsel to come in its time, these godless hearers exclaim in defiance and mockery, May it come very soon, that we may actually see it ! ver. 19 ; Amos. v. 18 ; vi. 3 ; ix. 10 ; but that is in reality to confound all moral distinctions, ver. 20, to wish to be the only wise people, ver. 21, or, at once to say the severest thing, wickedly to draw near and bring upon themselves guilt and sin with the cords of vanity (of a vain and wanton

mind), as with the most powerful and strongest ropes (for such vain mocking speeches appear to be only like a supercilious joke spoken without thought, and yet they really include all sin, in fact, the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, xxii. 14), ver. 18. And this transgression is indeed only the final consequence of others which have already become so predominant; those who are thus obdurate are, acc. ver. 22, also those frivolous rioters of the second strophe, and, acc. ver. 23, those unjust people of the first, ver. 8. But because this intentional mockery of the distinct divine word is suicide of their own inmost life, the suitable punishment can be no other than that as stubble and hay sink in a moment before blazing fire, so their root and blossom vanish rapidly and immediately when seized by the fire of the divine judgment, the first internally devoured as by putrefaction, the second flying away like dust and ashes, Ex. xv. 7; Hos. ix. 16. And with this dreadful word comes evidently the end of a chief section, just as vv. 22 and 23 gradually resume the two previous strophes, and by that means also everything is rounded off in this complete whole.

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The words, v. 1, admit no other meaning than that given above; but since accurate delineation suits a story, the word יִדִּי and דֹּרִי must be understood quite definitely. But the words, ver. 2, are certainly to be looked upon as an actual song; and although as containing a narrative they cannot rise to any great elevation, at least in קָרְנוֹ בֶּן שָׁמֶן an uncommon form of expression occurs. That a *horn* should signify a *mountain* is at least not common in Hebrew; the supposition lacks support that the *horn of Ben-Shámen* (i.e. *son of fatness*) was intended as a highly figurative name for the mountain, i.e. mountainous district, of Israel as dwelling, acc. Deut. xxxii. 13, 14, in fatness, as if it were an imitation of the name of Benjamin; since *horn* as a *mountain* may be masculine, it may be taken more

simply as denoting a *fat*, fertile, *height*, and in any case allude to the fruitful Canaan; but in that case the expression is the second one of an unusual and poetic nature.

That מִטָּר, v. 6, along with הַמִּטָּר, expresses to send *only one rain*, appears from § 281a, and this emphasis of the expression must not be overlooked.

מִתִּי, v. 13, which as *people* gives no meaning suitable to the verse-members, is incontestably a corruption of מִיֹּד, also acc. to Deut. xxxii. 24, as is shown, *Lehrb. der Heb. Sp.* p. 57, note; how the word comes to have this passive force is explained § 149 g.

v. 17, instead of גָּרִים, *sojourning as strangers*, which would be too feeble here, אֲגָרִים must be read, in accordance with the structure of the members and with the LXX. But that the verse originally stood not here at the end of the second, but at the end of the first strophe, is quite clear. The tremendous utterance of ver. 15, sq., which, as in ch. ii. forms the best close to the strophe, would only be weakened in its effect by the addition of ver. 17 in this place. On the other hand, this description as *fat ones* entirely suits the rich ones of the first strophe; and the words in that case form a suitable transition to the following strophe.

The correct meaning of the sentences, v. 18, depends especially on a knowledge of the fact, that שָׁוְיָ precisely in Yesaya's usage, i. 13; xxx. 28, retains its original force of what is vain, or vanity and deceit, and so far is by no means equal to *sin* or *guilt*.

3. *A wider historical and geographical survey, including Samaria*, CH. v. 25; ix. 7-x. 4; v. 26-30.

The discourse rises again to a more free historical survey, extending into the past and the future, and this time it takes a wider sweep to include the sister kingdom. The past shows that many severe calamities, like strokes of the divine anger,

have already been sent for the many transgressions of the nation, and it would not be difficult to enumerate just as many severe strokes as there had been transgressions; especially has Samaria been chastised in very various ways: *but all these strokes have not sufficed*, the measure of the transgressions continues still to grow, and therefore the correcting hand of Yahvé in anger is still stretched out to inflict other strokes, until finally the all-destructive blow will come upon the whole land, namely, the approach of the Assyrians, that final blow which has been briefly referred to, iii. 1, 2, 16—iv. 1; v. 13. After a brief transition to this new subject, v. 25, we have a circular series of four brief strophes, ix. 7—x. 4, each of which begins by mentioning one of many great transgressions, and most of which proceed to mention a punishment due to the transgression as already experienced, while all of them without exception end with the ever-recurring sentence, that the punishment has not been therewith concluded; the greater and final punishment which has yet to follow, to which the recurring sentence points with such solemn significance, is then presented with marvellous power of language in the last strophe, vv. 26-30, which fittingly closes the series. Each of these four strophes has from 4—5 verses, and the first three are so much occupied with the transgressions and fortunes of Samaria that the transition thereto is prepared for by a specially marked form of language, ix. 7. Thus the three strophes, ix. 7-20, in reality form a small oracle concerning Samaria which cannot be divided, although in a higher sense it is in itself quite incomplete, and by its concluding words constantly points to something which has yet to follow.

What is known to us as to the calamities and defeats of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes which are mentioned here, is treated of *Hist. of Israel*, iv. p. 156, sq. (iii. p. 646, sq.). That the words, ix. 13-16, are intended to refer to the invasions of the Assyrians under Tiglath-Pileser, is not evident from the context.

## V.

25 Therefore Yahvé's wrath burned against his people, | and he stretched forth his hand over it and smote it so that the mountains trembled, and corpses were like off-scouring in the midst of the streets : || —*with all this his anger turned not, and still his hand is outstretched!* ||

## IX.

## 1.

7 A word the Lord sent into Yaqob, | and it will fall in Israel, || that the whole nation may feel it, Ephraïm and the inhabitant of Samaria, | in pride and in bravado, saying : || “bricks fell down, yet we build with freestone! | sycomores were felled, yet  
10 we cause cedars to spring up instead!” || So then Yahvé strengthened Ressîn's princes against it, | and its enemies he maileth : || Arám in front and Philistines behind—who devoured Israel with a full mouth—: | *with all this his anger turned not, and still his hand is outstretched!* ||

## 2.

And the nation turned not to him who smote it, | and Yahvé of Hosts they sought not. || So then Yahvé destroyed from Israel head and tail, | palm  
15 and rush in one day\*; || and the leaders of this nation became misleaders, | and those of it who were led destroyed-ones. || Therefore over his youths the Lord rejoiceth not, | and his orphans and his widows he doth not compassionate, | because every one is unholy and of evil, and every mouth is speaking



godlessness—: || *with all this his anger turned not, and still his hand is outstretched!* ||

\* [*Old-man and man-of-repute is the head, | and falsely teaching prophet is the tail.*]

3.

For long since wrong burneth like fire, devouring thorn and thistle, | and kindling the thickets of the forest, so that they curl up in columns of smoke. || By the wrath of Yahvé of Hosts the land was scorched up, | and the nation becometh like food of fire, they spare not one the other; || and they devoured on the right and were hungry, and ate on the left and were not satisfied, | they eat—each one  
20 the flesh of his arm, || Manasse, Ephráim and—Ephráim, Manasse, the two together against Yuda: || —*with all this his anger turned not, and still his hand is outstretched!* ||

X.

4.

1 O they who decide vain decisions, | and are always penning down mischief, || to thrust away the weak from judgment, and to rob the rights of the sufferers of my people, | that widows may be their prey, and they may spoil the orphans! || (But what will ye do at the day of visitation, and when overthrow cometh from afar? | unto whom will ye flee for help, and whither hide your glory? || —nothing but one cringeth as a prisoner, and as those to be slain they fall!): | —*with all this his anger turned not, and still his hand is outstretched!* ||

## V.

- 26 So then he lifteth up a signal to the Heathen from afar, and hisseth to them from the end of the earth, | —and lo quickly hastily he cometh; || no weary one and no stumbler therein, he slumbereth not and sleepeth not, | and the girdle of his loins is never loosed, the thong of his shoes never torn off; || he whose arrows are sharpened, and all his bows bent, | the hoofs of his horses deemed like flint, and his wheels like the hurricane; || he hath a roar like the lioness, | he roareth like young lions and rageth and catcheth the prey and secureth it  
 30 without a deliverer. || And it rageth over them on that day like the sea's raging; | though they look to the earth, lo there is thick darkness, | and the light hath become dark in its fogs. ||

v. 25 makes plainly the important transition to what follows. Once (during the present generation) Yahvé manifested himself also in Jerusalem as the God who inflicts rigorous chastisement when his anger is provoked by such transgressions, and the blow he inflicted was such that the mountains trembled and many men became corpses in a moment, for whom none troubled themselves: but that was only a first stroke; he threatens to strike still further. In the last words we have the fundamental utterance, which as a continual echo forms the basis and the life of the four following larger strophes, in which the discourse takes new starts in order to follow out this thought. What historical fact in the kingdom of Yuda is referred to, is made somewhat problematic by the brevity of the words; the great earthquake under 'Uzzia, Am. i. 1; "Zech." xiv. 5, in which many people perished, may be thought of, *e.g.*; a pestilence is not clearly described.

1. A threatening word (namely, that same fundamental utterance), thus the discourse makes a new start with added energy, has Yahvé sent from heaven into the nation like a heavily falling burden ("Zech." ix. 1), that the whole nation, but especially the Northern kingdom, may be made to recognise and feel it: and feel it just in the midst of its infatuated pride, notwithstanding that it has already been made tributary to the Assyrians, which leads it to imagine that it will more than recover its former power by means of injustice and depredatory raids, ver. 8, sq. Accordingly Yahvé recently put into defensive armour, as if to punish the nation for its sins, all its smaller enemies, so that the Syrians (the princes of Ressîn from Damascus) and Philistines, the first from the North-east, the latter from the South-west (1 Kings xv. 27) committed depredations in its territory: but because the afore-named pride is not broken down and this punishment has not attained its end, another and severer punishment must follow! Thus the fundamental utterance recurs here in sufficiently close connexion with the whole strophe, although the figure in which it is clothed has its original place, v. 25 only. The two phrases, ver. 9, are figurative: bricks, sycomores are commoner than hewn-stones and cedars. Ver. 10, sq., must refer to small conflicts with the surrounding nations with the exception of the Assyrians, in which the reduced kingdom became involved, comp. "Zech." xi. 10; just as vv. 13, 15, sq., refer to a somewhat more important battle, which the kingdom lost in these struggles probably against the Syrians, and as a distant result of which probably the alliance, vii. 1, was formed.

2. A second transgression of the Northern kingdom is its impenitence, which was never displayed more plainly than just now, when Yahvé has sought to bring it to attend and reflect by the chastisement which it has just felt so painfully. Accordingly a calamitous day of battle followed, when the nation, misled by its leaders and not seeking the right leader, was overthrown together with its heads, vv. 13, 15, comp. iii. 12;

yea, ver. 16 proceeds with reference to this recent severe overthrow, on this very account Yahvé permits the warriors of Israel to perish, as if he had no pleasure in them, and as if he felt no compassion at seeing a multitude of widows and orphans made thereby, because within the nation everything is perpetually corrupt — therefore again the necessity of still severer punishment.—Since in this connexion the figures, ver. 13, head and tail, palm and rush, (xix. 15), can only denote officers and privates in the army, the explanation, ver. 14, which is also very unpoetical, cannot have originated with Yesaya, but from a very early reader who compared iii. 2, sq., and made the passages refer to each other; comp. x. 16-19, 33, sq.

3. For there is added, as the third transgression of this kingdom, ver. 17, an unrighteousness which like burning fire seizes upon and destroys everything, both high and low, in the nation, the thorns and thistles as well as the thickets of the high forest-trees, so that they are dissipated and pass away in a column of smoke, ver. 17, comp. x. 16-18. But unrighteousness which commits ravages upon its own nation from the first carries its own divine punishment within itself, as is immediately added, vv. 18-20a, with similar imagery: indeed nothing short of the wrath of Yahvé itself, the fruit of unrighteousness, appears to have blazed through the land to its very centre, so that already it is unable to get free from a fire which is feeding upon its vitals—all the horrors of anarchy; a condition of anarchy, where there are no laws and no rulers, when once, like unmanageable fire it gets the upper hand, is like *bulimus* (*heiss hunger*) which is never satisfied, a man destroys everything, devours right and left ("Zech." xi. 6), and yet is not satisfied, until every one begins to devour the flesh of his own arm, his own members (Job xviii. 13), one inseparable brother-tribe the other; or, by way of variety, both some day unite against Yuda, the distant brother-tribe! With all this

there is therefore again no rest: a final punishment must follow! comp. "Zech." xi. 6, 14.

4. The special, refined character of the unrighteousness of the covetous judges and authorities which is condemned, x. 1, 2, points of itself to Yuda and to what was said above, iii. 14, sq.; v. 7, sq., 23; but the transition to this kingdom had already been prepared at the end of the previous strophe, ix. 20, by that form of sudden transition in which Yesaya is a master. Since, however, no special calamity, no suitable punishment, except that mentioned at the commencement, v. 25, and here again pre-supposed, had befallen these magnates, the prophet is unable to compare the past in this as he had done in the previous strophes: he can only point them in a parenthesis to the future approach of the judgment and overthrow, and enquire what they will do to meet it when their destruction is announced by a distant noise, to *whose* castle they will flee (as if a castle and fortification would then avail!), and *whither* they will bring into security and there *leave* their glory and power which they have won unrighteously? O then there is nothing left for the magnates but that they should cringe in fetters like the basest captives, or that they should sink down amongst others who are to be slain, and dead like them! that is, treated thus by the Assyrians; which already gives an inkling of what immediately follows, v. 26-30; but this strophe also is first closed with the fundamental thought, that for such transgressions a final punishment must yet come.

v. 26-30. What therefore is the final blow which must necessarily come? Far distant barbarians, whom they have never seen, must come upon the whole land, to finish the punishment as Yahvé's instruments and to reach every sinner; the Assyrian especially, whom Yesaya does not name here but intends and plainly enough describes, so that the discourse from ver. 26 *b* suddenly falls into the singular and keeps it up. Yahvé need only plant a signal of alarm upon a high mountain (xi. 12; xiii. 2), or, according to another figure which is



equally natural here, need only hiss, as men call a swarm of bees (vii. 18; “Zech.” x. 8), to bring the swarms of the most distant nations quickly into the holy land, ver. 26, and how marvellously rapid and unimpeded is their march, ver. 27, how unrivalled their equipment when they are seen approaching, ver. 28, how irresistible their dreadful attack at the decisive moment, ver. 29! There is then heard, ver. 30, not merely the terrible battle-cry, the thunder of the victorious and destructive enemy; what is much worse, and constitutes the consummation of the judgment divine, it then thunders over him who is attacked and is crying to heaven for help, terribly raging in the heavens like the raging of the sea; from below and from above no deliverance or comfort, and if the eye, which had been turned away from heaven by terror of the thunder, turns to the earth again, lo, there it sees all light darkened into close (thick) darkness! comp. viii. 21, sq.; Qôran ii. 18, sq. The image taken from an earthquake, Plin. Epist. vi.; xx. 16; xvi. 17. Harris’ *Æthiopia*, i. p. 319, sq.

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It is incontestable that the four small strophes with the recurring verse originally belonged here, and are intelligible here only. The very first strophe of these four is intelligible by means of v. 25 only, and the last is plainly intended to bring the discourse back to the point where it was broken off. The recurring word, which prepares for the final judgment, is repeated *five times*, this being an ancient sacred number.

ix. 10, it is necessary to read with many MSS. שָׂרִי instead of צָרִי, which only apparently corresponds to the following אֲדִיר. One of these powerful princes of Syria, or rather Damascus, was at that time that Tâbeél of vii. 6.

The words, ix. 14, which have a reference to iii. 2, sq., are such a bold and telling satire that we may safely conclude that they originated during the period that the prophets were still very active in public affairs, as was the case as late as Yéremyá’s

time. Some younger prophet combining the words, ix. 13, with those iii. 2, sq., may have hit upon this satire, put it into the poetical garb of two members, and written it in the margin opposite this passage: but that the words are from Yesaya, and that this is their original place, cannot be said. The prophets at that time, like so many ecclesiastics of our day, had come to that, that they were quite content if they were only suffered to come in as the tail in public affairs; and it may be very acceptable to us to meet in the Bible a telling utterance upon their conduct in this respect: but it does not follow that it owes its origin in this passage to Yesaya. If the two members are excluded, the strophe has still twelve members, only one less than the first, whilst, it is true, the other two have fourteen each.

It should be observed how compressed the words become in the members of ix. 20: the measure allowed for the strophe must speedily come to an end.

x. 4, בְּלִי יָ, to be taken acc. § 356 *b*, and תִּחְתִּי instead of means *as good as*, or *not better than*, in the same way as בִּיעַר, xxxii. 14, means no more than *as*; the change from the singular to the plural, which is elsewhere so common when the language is general, in this case follows the change of members, and is one of its ornaments. So far as the meaning is concerned, we have nothing more analogous than the words of the poet, Ps. lxxxii. 7.

On the repetition of the simple *imperf.* with the equally simple הָ v. 29, sq., see § 343 *b*.—If we follow the accents, v. 30, we must translate: *then behold there is darkness; straitness and light; it has become dark in the earth's fogs; then the rapid change from light to darkness in the last moments, and the vain, and therefore more terrible, darting of flashes of lightning into even the deep darkness, appears to be more vividly described, so that we might feel inclined to choose this collocation of the words. But in reality the description is not then by any means clear and simple enough; the similar con-*

cluding words, viii. 21, sq., also lead us to a better meaning. The combination, צר קִשָּׁה, *narrow, close, i.e. thick, horrible darkness*, only gives an image like that of Job xv. 23, sq.; xviii. 6, sq.; xx. 16.

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## II. YESAYA'S SECOND BOOK, CH. VI. 1—IX. 6; XVII. 1—11.

While Yesaya's first book belonged to the commencement of the reign of Ahaz, 740, this second, according to all indications, belongs to the commencement of the reign of Hizqia, 724, when the prophet during the sixteen years of the reign of the former frivolous and capricious king had passed through the most painful personal experiences and had also seen the power of Yuda fall very low. Incontestably he considered this juncture, when in Hizqia there arose a new king justifying revived hopes, as again well fitted for extending his labours by means of writing also, and to fix more firmly the memory of many of his most memorable actions and fortunes. He had already laboured thirty-three years under three very different kings: the wealth of his prophetic experiences impelled him, and now the kingdom again stood before the unknown beginning of a new period, which as far as the king was concerned permitted better hopes, but, as the result of long confusions and serious errors in the past, was threatening new calamities, especially since in the interval between this and the former book the Assyrian power had become oppressive to Yuda as well as to Israel. But however varied the fortunes of the kingdom and those of the prophet himself had been during these thirty-three years, when he reviewed the whole period of his labours, and realised to himself with what divine forebodings and thoughts he had laboured from the very first, he discovered in all that he himself and especially in what the kingdom had gone through nothing that had not already passed before him clearly in its divine necessity in the first moments of the

excitation of his prophetic spirit. Accordingly, he resolved to describe now more in the form of a prophetic survey of his entire past prophetic career both the profound defects of the kingdom, the consequences of which had continually become more and more manifest during his life, and his own enduring hope, and to describe them both as they had been most vividly present to his mind from the first, and had since, amidst all the changing circumstances, been constantly more clearly and convincingly expounded by him.

The main portion of this book had, therefore, necessarily an entirely different plan and execution from the foregoing. Its style is historical : and although very long orations are brought within this frame-work, it remains essentially narration, from which everything proceeds and which everywhere recurs at the proper place. Pieces of another kind might be attached, but they do not form the substance of this book. The book fell clearly into three parts : (1) the splendid introduction in the narrative of the call of the prophet, ch. vi ; (2) the continued narrative of his prophetic labours, ch. vii.-ix. 6 ; (3) more loosely appended pieces, of which at present we have preserved at least the piece, xvii. 1-11. We are no longer in a position to know what the commencement of this third part originally was : the second part, as a closer examination clearly enough shows, has come to us unfortunately incomplete : and since the pieces which compose it must have originally stood in a close connexion, it is more easy to recognize this in its case.

From viii. 16, it appears that the prophet availed himself in the composition of this book of the help of disciples. Long ago a circle of more intimate friends and disciples had gathered around him. It is all the more easy to understand how in places he can here be spoken of in the first person, ch. vi. and ch. viii. and in the third ch. vii. The immediate present is alluded to at most incidentally in such words as ix. 3.



## 1. INTRODUCTION.

*Yesaya's Consecration*, CH. VI.

When Yesaya, after so many years of prophetic activity, looked back to its first commencement, full of the experiences of the intervening years, he could recall various feelings which had flooded his mind in the strength and consecration of that moment. For there can be no doubt that the prophet as a fact once passed through such an elevating moment of consecration, when he became conscious both of the full glory of Yahvé and of his own mission, a moment the immeasurable power of which, determining his whole life, continued to influence him, unchanged and undecaying, and impelled him to everything which he undertook: it is entirely consistent to suppose that the prophet in such a moment, before which stands a whole life like a crowded picture, clearly foresaw at the same time the uncommon difficulties with which he would have to contend, and the picture of which nevertheless did not terrify him!\* It is necessary to suppose such a historical basis. But of all the feelings which then overwhelmed him there is one especially which had so often been confirmed during his whole prophetic career, and which he now recalls most vividly, because it most accorded with the tone of mind in which he then was. This is the feeling of the unfruitfulness of his past labours, at least in general. For Yesaya does not merely describe historically what he once saw and felt in the spirit, nor merely with a historical purpose. But what he had then seen in vision had now become in his mind by the experience of many years an abiding idea and a certain conviction of a higher necessity, and he now writes for the readers of a time which is far distant from that sacred moment of his consecration. In this reminiscence, which was thus conditioned, it seems to him

\* Like Christ from the first commencement of his Messianic labours, he thought of the end, nor did he shrink from the image of death, so that the subsequent fact as it approached nearer, only confirmed what had not seemed strange to him from the commencement.



as if He, before whom all connexion and all development is clearly open from first to last, had consigned to him from that very first moment the mournful commission to be a prophet of evil. Thus he sketches in this introductory piece, first, indeed, vv. 1-4, the picture of the infinite glory which he once saw, since no one can become a prophet who has not at some time first so beheld the glory and greatness of Yahvé that he can never lose the picture of it again; he then describes, vv. 5-8, how the divine commission and strengthening for the prophetic office follow the clearness and certainty of these previous intuitions after all fear of man has been overcome; but the most important thing follows at the end, vv. 9-13, the statement of the commission which he who was thus called, the prophet thus prepared for everything, receives, namely, the mournful commission to speak and to labour in vain, as if a curse were laid upon his labours which were designed for the national weal; neither for the future is there any other hope than that mixed with wormwood, that the salvation of the true community, which is indeed eternally secure, can come only after the entire ruin of the existing order of things and the most unsparing purification of the nation and the state. Thus fruitless the prophet had for a long time found his labours; with hopes thus cast down by dark forebodings, he was then looking into the future: that which he will subsequently expand in many discourses is here in this sublime introduction to the whole book comprised within a few strong words, elucidated from the highest stand-point and introduced with reference to its eternal necessity, in order that from the very first it may be evident for what purpose this prophet was called, what his leading truths are, and what fortunes of his this book will describe. In this way the piece becomes a suitable introduction to the whole book: and in the way in which the far-off future is touched upon with a rapid glance, this preparation accomplishes its end: the attention is kept sufficiently alive. But just as the third part, vv. 9-13 is the most

important both as regards this piece and the whole book, so the second part constitutes the true centre, the first explaining upon what insight and knowledge the call to the prophetic office rested, and the third what the nature of this office would be, while the second describes the genuine prophetic courage which will be alarmed by nothing when once it has received the higher consecration.

But in order to form a perfectly correct estimate of this sublime introduction, which remained ever afterwards as a preeminently glorious picture before the eyes of the later prophets, we must not overlook the fact that this portion in its entirety receives its true meaning only when viewed as an introduction, while with respect to its close it would be entirely unsatisfactory if its express design were not that of an introductory piece, the business of which is to draw the attention to something which is to follow. If Yesaya had in reality had nothing beyond the fruitlessness of his prophetic labours to which to look, nothing could have been more dreadful: but the eternal Messianic hope is here indicated, although but barely indicated, and with a single word at the end, ver. 13, and below the place will occur when it will appear more prominently and reveal itself with all its blessed consolations. Hence, only the one great truth remains here at the beginning, that the genuine prophet may not suffer himself to be frightened from his duty, when once he has found this in God, but must be emboldened by the clearly foreseen and divinely necessary fruitlessness of his pains, although the fruitlessness may continue for a long time, indeed, may be increased by the course of his very labours in proportion as they come into collision with the resisting world. A final prospect of better times is nevertheless opened at last, ver. 13.

## VI.

- 1      1. In the death-year of the king 'Uzziya saw I the Lord sitting upon a high and exalted throne,| his train filling the temple ; || Saraphs stood high

around him, six wings had each: | with twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he flew; || and one called to the other and said:

Holy, holy, holy is Yahvé of Hosts!

the fulness of the whole earth is his glory! ||

Then the "projections of the thresholds shook at the sound of him that called, | and the house filleth with smoke. ||

5. 2. Then said I: "woe is me, for I am undone, | because a man of unclean lips am I, and in the midst of a people of unclean lips I dwell, | that the king Yahvé of Hosts mine eyes saw!" || Yet there flew to me one of the Saraphs, holding a chipstone | which with tongs he had taken from the altar; || and touched my mouth and said: lo this hath touched thy lips: | and so will thy guilt depart, and thy sin may be atoned for. || Then heard I the voice of the Lord saying: whom shall I send? and who will go for us? | and I said: "here am I, send me!" ||

3. Then said he: go, so that thou sayest to this people:

"hear on and understand not!

see on and perceive not!" ||

- 10 make slothful the heart of this people, and its ears heavy and its eyes closed up; | lest it see with its eyes, or hear with its ears | or its heart understand and it return, that one may heal it! || — Then said I: how long, O Lord? | and he said: until

the cities are waste without inhabitant and the houses without men, and the ground shall be wasted to desolation, || and Yahvé removeth the men | and great is the emptiness in the midst of the land! || and is there then still therein a tenth, yet that also must go again into the fire: | like the terebinth and like the oak to which at the felling remaineth a root-trunk, 'tis a holy seed—its trunk! ||

1. vv. 1-4. The unhindered glance into true glory and holiness, which must precede the call and labours of every true prophet. In the present instance, when a prophet is about to be called whose mission it is to originate a new and decisive epoch in the history of the divine kingdom, the glory of Yahvé cannot be conceived and described under a more suitable image than that of a ruler, who, in the midst of a solemn gathering of counsellors, the magnates of the empire doing him homage, is seated upon his exalted throne, as for the purpose of delivering a highly important resolution with regard to the necessities of the kingdom. For it cannot be denied that the appearance of a great prophet deeply concerns the inmost nature and true prosperity of the divine kingdom; and inasmuch as he can appear, at the moment he is wanted, only for the purpose of meeting a requirement of this kingdom, his appearance is preceded, as it were, by a divine council with regard to this requirement and his mission. All the great and sublime things which the imagination can picture in connexion with monarchs enthroned in the midst of grave and awful counsellors, may, therefore, be pictured here in a far loftier form where Yahvé is concerned. Possibly such actual pictures as those supplied in Rosellini's *Monum. Stor. pl.* cxiv. may be present to the prophet's mind. But inasmuch as it is contrary to the primitive Mosaic feeling to actually conceive and describe the Highest in material images and pictures, the



imagination does not venture to behold and to delineate the face or the heart of the Almighty himself. At that moment when He himself is beheld, it is merely the more external and lower parts of Him, such as reach down to the sphere of visibility, which are more particularly described, ver. 1. The infinitely awful, holy and astonishing characteristics of this picture can be fully brought forward only in the description of the highest servants of this kingdom, of their *salutation* at the appearance and at the commencement of the transaction, and, therefore, of their doxology and its effect, vv. 2-4. One proof that the Saraphs were originally conceived as animal figures is supplied by the way in which they are here represented as turned in homage towards the throne, covering their feet with wings : for this supposes that they were conceived as naked, like animals. As has been before explained in my *History of Israel* I. 322 (I. 462), they are primarily *Dragon-like* creatures, whose distinctive characteristic, in antithesis to the Kerûbs, is their sharp, flaming eyes, a characteristic which qualifies them to be the guards of the Throne and the guardians of the commands which proceed from it. However, in proportion as the Mosaic religion was of a spiritual nature do these creatures appear here in a more spiritual form, as the highest servants of Yahvé, in profound reverence, surrounding his throne, and emulously singing his praise, as priests in the heavenly temple. When, however, these servants have presented to him in their doxology that offering which is to him the only acceptable one, there is heard from the Throne also a cry so powerful that the threshold, where the prophet stands listening in the distance, shakes at the mighty voice. The cry in this instance has another meaning than that in Amos vii. 4 : it is intended to convey the declaration that something is *well-pleasing*, as is immediately made known by the fact that *the house*, i.e. the inner temple, begins to fill with smoke, as from the acceptable incense of this offering (Rev. viii. 3) ; and therewith the end of this ceremony, which opens the divine service, is indicated. In this



way scenes taken from the proceedings around the throne of a king holding a solemn council, are mixed with those from the temple service, inasmuch as no ordinary king is here described. Every word of the description is well chosen, not one too many, and even the wings of the Saraphs are specially described, ver. 2, only to make clear what follows, ver. 5.

2. vv. 5-8. The man that has thus gazed into perfect glory and is electrified by it, is capable of becoming a prophet. At the first moment, it is true, doubt and fear may fall upon him in the presence of the glory of Yahvé, which he now for the first time clearly perceives, ver. 5, inasmuch as the consciousness of human weakness, both personal and general, becomes oppressive and consuming in proportion as the true glory is beheld and felt. Hence the ancient legends beautifully narrate how so many perish, or are in danger of perishing, at the sudden sight and the piercing nearness of the Infinite (Gen. xviii. 23, sq.; Ex. xxxiii. 20; Judges xiii. 22): for he is always *higher still* than men think. At the same time, this human fear, in the case of him in whose heart a true foundation has been previously laid, is felt only in order that it may be overcome for ever by the stronger impulses of the spirit. Whilst the prophet is in dread of perishing, a Saraph has already flown to his side to purify his still unprophetic lips as with a hotstone from that altar upon which the purest offerings, those pure words of the Saraph's, burn, the fire of which, therefore, purifies the human lips, and by consecration renders them Saraphic, vv. 6, 7. As therefore now the cry from the Throne is heard inquiring who will undertake the divine mission, which has just been considered as needed in the divine kingdom; just as this cry falls kindly and sympathisingly upon the ear of Yesaya, as if he belonged already to this heavenly circle, and is clearly understood by him in this sense, he offers himself confidently as prophet, having become already strong and courageous in Yahvé. Thus free, and at the same time thus

determined by higher instigation, is the happy resolution to undertake the pure service of the spirit.

3. vv. 9-13. Yesaya is to become a prophet, a prophet of *this people* (contemptuously spoken, a people which Yahvé is not willing to call *his people*) : but he must utter as it were a curse over the nation which is perpetually hardened against the words and deeds of Yahvé, ver. 9 : this prophet receives the hard commission by his labours to make the nation only more hardened and less open to receive the prosperity which his efforts were intended to promote, ver. 10. For it must be allowed, that when a prophet of this eminence labours, no one can remain indifferent and undecided with regard to him : either men follow him to their well-being, or they resist the truth of his words to their destruction, so that it may be said, with severity and enigmatically yet truthfully, at a time when this mournful effect generally prevails, that the prophet brings hardening and calamity instead of conversion and prosperity. On the other hand, this mournful effect cannot be conceived as final, otherwise the prophets would despair of their own mission. Nor can Yesaya rest content with this curse upon the immediate future. He ventures, therefore, in pain to ask how long the perversity will last. Indeed, the truth, as a final prospect surrounded with clouds, is made known, that there must first take place a complete destruction of the existing kingdom and a purification of the whole community, penetrating to its very centre ; that a trial of fire, which repeatedly coming spares nothing, must first destroy all existing external things, even unto the mysterious hidden foundation. This basis is, indeed, indestructible, and will remain as the sacred germ of the new improved community, just as the trunk of terebinths and oaks, which is deeply and ineradicably sunk into the earth, bears constantly new shoots, an image of eternity and immortality springing from an inward rejuvenating power, comp. Job xiv. 7, sq. The emphasis of the whole sentence, ver. 13, thus rests upon the last word, *its* (that of the earth and community)

*root-trunk.* *Holy*, i.e. inviolable, indestructible seed and germ of a new improved community is alone the root-trunk, hidden in the earth, of the existing community, its life-root, the *remnant* as Yesaya elsewhere so often calls it. In these few words lie both the mournful seriousness as well as the indestructible hope of those times, all the apprehensions and joyous surmisings of the prophets compressed into one picture.

On vi. 2. The *Saraphs*, which only accidentally occur in this connexion, will never be properly understood, unless it is borne in mind that as the Kerûbs and Griffins are primarily even veritably and historically the same, so also the *Saraphs* and *Dragons*. Both go back, therefore, into those primitive ages, which explain how it is that even in China from that earliest time to the present the residence of the Dragon is synonymous with the residence of the Emperor (see Prémare on Gaubil's *Shuking*). In fact the Arabic word *sharafa* as related to *הִשְׁקִיף* and *שָׁפַח* and, on the other hand, also to the Arabic word *ṭarafa* points in many derivatives to a kind of *looking*; and the further departure from the letters of the word *δέσπω* is explained by the great distance of time since the two families of language separated. However, the primary meaning of the word has been preserved precisely in Hebrew both in Yesaya's own writings, xiv. 29; xxx. 6, in the case of the mythical *flying dragons* occurring only in poetry, and in the name of the *Saraph-Serpents* as a special kind of serpent even still in use in the narrative Num. xxi. 8; and the only thing that is remarkable is that the short word *Saraph* bears the above exalted meaning. At the same time, in this simplicity it is only a parallel case to that of *Kerûb*. Comp. on the *Saraphs* the picture from Umm-el 'Avâ-mid in Renan's *Mission de Phénicie* I. p. liii. [See also the Author's *Die Lehre der Bibel* § 219.]

The song of the *Saraphs*, vi. 3, is the salutation of homage with which the nearest servants of the king approach their

sovereign on a solemn occasion, and with which the whole solemnity opens. But how entirely different is the homage which must be paid to Him from that rendered to even the most mighty earthly sovereign ! No wish can be expressed on his behalf, since he has everything ; only truly to know and praise Him is the proper homage, at least for those who know Him as his immediate servants do. The true knowledge of Him, however, consists in perceiving how there is corresponding to his *infinite holiness* or exaltation beyond everything evil, which is his inmost nature, his equally *infinite glory* of revelation externally, *i.e.*, in the world : or that his glory is itself the fulness of the world, and there is nothing in the world in which that is not revealed. The verse, in accordance with these two comprehensive sentences of the Saraphs' hymn, falls into two members, and as they sing antiphonally, the one half of them the one part and the other half the other part of the hymn, their hymn becomes an antiphone (in choirs Ps. xxvi. 12). This is expressly said ver. 3, and must be supposed from the nature of the temple-music of the priests. When it is considered with what sublimity and how worthily they sing it, the shortest doxology must be deemed sufficient ; and how imperishably must it be fixed in the memory of that mortal who may have once distinctly heard it !

Nevertheless, the thought would be quite unsuitable at this place, that this hymn was so powerful that its sound had made the projections of the thresholds tremble : it is intended to vibrate through hearts, Yesaya's, for instance, not thresholds. There is but one loud cry which can be heard above this hymn and make everything tremble : that is the voice of God himself, who is certainly meant by *him that crieth*, ver. 3, as in the similar case Amos vii. 4, see vol. I. p. 197. Neither can it be proved from ver. 3 that *he who crieth* is the same as they who cry. On the contrary, it appears immediately by the smoke which soars lightly from the altar what the meaning of this cry is. The word צִיָּא bears the same relation to שָׂאָה as

*labrum* to *labium*, and probably came as an architectural term from the Phœnicians; **זַמּוֹת** denotes, in accordance with the meaning of its root, the *foreparts* or projections, exactly like the Arab. *imām*; comp. also Tanhûm on Judges xix. 27.

From the mention of a *chipped stone* (*stückstein*), or a *bond-stone* (*legstein*), **רֶצֶף** ver. 6, which could be easily detached from the rest with tongs, it follows that the genuine altars even in the temple of Israel still continued to copy the primitive simplicity of the true Hebrew altars, especially in the construction of the hearth. (Comp. *Alterthümer* p. 162 sq. (137)).

Ver. 9: *hear* the divine truths, which are preached by the prophets, which is what is primarily intended; and *see* the divine wonders which are still always appearing in history. But it is as if they were destined never to *understand* those nor to *perceive* these.

**מַצֵּבָה** vi. 13, precisely like *stipes* from *stare*, is our *stump*, (Germ. *stumpf*, *strunk*) trunk. With a marvellously incisive brevity the whole thought to which the sentence points is thrown into the last word.

## 2. THE MAIN PORTION OF THE BOOK.

### CH. VII. 1—IX. 6.

This entire chief section of the book could only have supplied, by its narratives and discourses, the confirmation of the twofold truth with which the introductory narrative so emphatically closed. As far as we can now see from evidence that has been preserved, it consisted of the following pieces:

#### (1). (*lost.*)

In all probability there stood here at the commencement a piece the contents and objects of which may be surmised from the words of viii. 18. We see from this verse that the prophet's own name had been made an object of prophetic



significance to his own mind. Whether he had received the name *Yesaya*, i.e., *God's salvation*, from his parents before he became a prophet or not, in either case it could symbolize the genuine prophetic truth, that eternal salvation is to be sought in Yahvé only, but in him is certainly to be found. And just as his entire family, as we shall soon see, became in our prophet's mind lofty symbols of his divine convictions and hopes, so was this the case especially with his own name. It must have once appeared to him in his prophetic ecstasy as if Yahvé said to him: as certainly as he had been called *God's salvation*, and must continue to be so called, does salvation dwell only in the true God, but certainly, in spite of all the existing gloom, exists in Him for all those who desire not to keep far from Him; the prophet must, therefore, continue to live as an unmistakable witness to this twofold truth, and to walk openly before all men in its bright light. And from that time he could neither hear his own name nor remember who he was without having this fundamental hope brought afresh to his mind: his bare name, when it had once been explained in this sense, might also serve as an admonition to the world around him. It is not difficult to comprehend what a number of the profoundest and most glorious truths could be connected with the simple event of this solemn consecration of the prophet's name. In his description of this event, he had but to give vent to the thoughts which flowed from the immediate stream of divine thought and speech of that occasion. It may be certainly gathered from what Yesaya says towards the end of the book viii. 18, with a brief backward reference, that somewhere in the book such words of God were poured forth in connexion with a narrative. And it is quite allowable to suppose that this piece stood at the opening of this chief section of the book, and also in close connexion with ch. vi. How gloomily the piece ch. vi. closes! And shall he who has just received the divine call, who has just been brought into the presence of God, remain content with his first faint, inter-

cessory utterance, vi. 11, and the immediate answer to it, vv. 11-13? Must he not at least, as at other times is his habit, wrestle at the conclusion for a divine sign and pledge with regard to the promise which lies concealed in the words, vi. 11-13? Well, thou thyself with thy name *God's-salvation* shalt live and move as this sign! This might be the response of the divine oracle. At this time the prophet was still quite alone, a mere man and a name! But if he henceforth only constantly lives and labours in the true divine idea of all that lies in his name, to how great an extent can he labour, suffer, and overcome in the divine spirit!

The above supposition can, however, be made probable from another consideration. Both Yéremyá and Hézeqiél in the commencement of their books have the introduction of our book before their minds, and sketch similar descriptions. But when Yéremyá, i. 11-19, and Hézeqiél, ii. 9—iii. 21, attach to the description of the call, with which Yesaya ch. vi. corresponds, some additional ones of a like character, it looks exactly as if they had read in their book of Yesaya something further after ch. vi. which was closely connected in point of meaning with the description of the call and consecration.

(2). (*lost.*)

For similar reasons it is clear that a piece immediately followed, in which was narrated how Yesaya, when his first son was born, came by divine instigation to give him the name *Sheár-yashúb*, i.e. *the remnant will be converted*. This is presupposed by the words which follow vii. 3-viii. 18, and corresponds to the following instance, viii. 3 sq. The matter itself had also its solemn import in the mind of Yesaya. The prophets Yôel, iii. 8, 'Amôs ix. 7, sq., and Hoséa had, it is true, already substantially proclaimed the bitter, and yet in another aspect, cheering anticipation, that an entirely new and really Messianic Israel must be formed,—that of the existing nation only a *remnant*, proved and purified by the profound sufferings, which had

been sent as a divine punishment upon the present incorrigible Israel, would remain as the indestructible germ of a new and truly reformed nation. But this view came upon Yesaya, acc. vi. 13, from the very first with much greater force. As early in his life as the birth of his first son, it appeared to him as if he were impelled by the divine spirit to name him, in accordance with this view, as a divine image and pledge of a future nobler Israel, in order that this child might grow up as a divine sign of the conviction, that there might be a nobler Israel, and that this was confidently to be looked for, at all events in the future. This prophetic conception with its blessed certainty was thus compressed as briefly as possible into this entirely new name. He subsequently refers at every opportunity to the comfort which had been given him in the short name and its idea, vii. 3; viii. 3; but not less to the humbling truth which was included in it for Israel as it then was, x. 20-22. Indeed, it is noteworthy how familiar this short word *Sheár* gradually became to him everywhere in quite other connexions.\*

It cannot be concluded from the example of the following case, viii. 3, sq. that this piece was very short. In the case of the birth of his second son, Yesaya might naturally make his narrative more concise. Besides, the meaning of the name of the second son had been already to a certain extent prefigured by what had been said with regard to the name of the first. But in the case of the first son he would desire to expound at some length the thought which was to be conveyed in the new name both for its own sake and because the case was quite a new one.

If this event as Yesaya narrated it, took place during the

\* One may say he was himself the first to form this very short word שְׂאָר acc. § 153 a: the earlier word is שְׂאָרִית or פְּלִיטָה, which he himself employed in the previous book, iv. 2; it is from this time that he also uses frequently שְׂאָר xvii. 3; xxi. 17; xxviii. 5; x. 19; xi. 11, 16; beside in Yesaya it is used afterwards only Sseph. i. 4, and still later authors. This instance clearly shows in what way a new word is originated, and how it gains currency.

reign of Yotham, it is easy to explain the transition to the events which occurred under Ahaz, which is made in the first words of the next piece.

(3). vii. 1-17.

We here learn that under this king the kingdoms of Damascus and Ephraïm had, from fear of the Assyrians, formed an alliance with the view of making a more energetic attack upon the kingdom of Yuda. Under Ahaz this kingdom had sunk very low, and the two allied powers hoped to strengthen themselves against the Assyrians by its complete subjugation. The inroads of the two powers into the territory of the bordering nations which were subject to Yuda had commenced during the reign of Yotham, and were continued successfully under Ahaz, 2 Kings xv. 37; xvi. 5, but the powers now concluded a close alliance for the purpose of making an advance upon Jerusalem with their combined armies. They intended to take this strong city, and to place there a king of their own choice as their vassal, of the name of Ben-Tâbeél, vii. 6, probably one of the Syrian magnates mentioned ix. 10. Accordingly as soon as the report reached Jerusalem, that an army with this object in view was collected in the north, in the ancient territory of the tribe of Ephraïm, all the inhabitants were thrown into the greatest alarm. The king Ahaz, with the rest of the royal family, suddenly lost all self-possession and courage: it was evident that he was in danger of adopting the most disastrous measures from base fear; and at last in his alarm he did really resort to the exceedingly doubtful and humiliating expedient of calling to his rescue by submissive requests and homage the Assyrian king, who then, we know, destroyed Damascus with one blow and made Yuda tributary, 2 Kings xvi. 10-20. The people of Yuda, to a great extent, without doubt, tired of the weak and unjust rule of this Davidic king, was glad of some change, but had such little knowledge of the sources of true help, that it beheld with a certain satisfaction the progress of



the combined enemies, viii. 6, 12. This unhappy state of things was made worse by the false prophets and magicians of all kinds who enjoyed the favour of the king, viii. 19. Yesaya, with his more intimate friends, alone preserved in this dark time of trial his manliness and presence of mind, maintaining and expounding, everywhere and against everyone, the true view of the situation and its divine lesson; and as his fellow-citizens refused for a time to understand him, he repeated unweariedly in the most varied forms the same fundamental truths. The following very important pieces supply a compressed abridgment of the very various prophetic discourses and labours of this period. The first piece narrates only Yesaya's transactions directly with the king.

## vii. 1-9.

The eternal, unchanging, fundamental principles which Yesaya held could not leave him in doubt with regard to his message to the king in the first moment of his surprise and despondency. The first advice of the prophet would be, before all things, circumspection, calmness and trust in Yahvé are needed here, that no precipitate step may be taken. Nor, when the resources and purposes of the enemy were quietly thought over, could it escape any but a superficial glance, that this desperate resolve of the combined nations, who were already not only greatly weakened by internal commotions but also threatened by the Assyrians, would not succeed. To the prophetic mind which without difficulty sees clearly through everything that is vain and weak, it very quickly became a certainty, that Yahvé would wholly overthrow the plans which had been projected with equal insolence and weakness against Jerusalem and the Davidic kingdom. For, notwithstanding the first confusion, there was at that time too much inward strength remaining in Jerusalem to permit it to be taken by a *coup de main*, and the Davidic kingdom to be so easily destroyed; and a confident and hopeful mind in this prophet



and his friends was the best guarantee of this. Without being invited by the king, Yesaya goes boldly to him for the purpose of explaining this exhortation to be calm and the divine promise, that the enemy will not attain their object. This his first utterance is purely one of encouragement, scarcely a syllable of a slightly threatening tone creeping in at the end in reference to the king's tendency to unbelief, vv. 1-9.

## VII.

- 1 And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Yotham the son of 'Uzzia, the king of Yuda, that Ressîn the king of Arâm and Péqach the son of Remalyáhu the king of Israel, marched against Jerusalem to attack it, (but he was not able to attack it). Then it was told to the house of David "Arâm encampeth in Ephráim," and his heart shook and his people's heart as forest-trees shake before the wind; but Yahvé said to Yesaya. "go forth now to meet Ahaz thou with Sheâr-Yashûb thy son at the end of the conduit of the upper reservoir, upon the path to the fullers' field, and say to him: 'Take heed and be quiet, fear not and be not faint-hearted | at these two stumps of smoking firebrands, | because the wrath of Ressîn and of Arâm and of the son of Remalyáhu burneth. ||
- 5 Therefore because Arâm purposeth against thee evil, | Ephráim and the son of Remalyáhu saying, || "let us march against Yuda and alarm it and take it for ourselves, | and make as king in its midst the son of Tâbeél!" || thus saith the Lord Yahvé: | It will not stand and not come to pass! || For Arâm's head is Damascus, and Damascus' head

Ressîn, \*and Ephráim's head Samaria, and Samaria's head the son of Remalyáhu: [but Yuda's head is Jerusalem, and Jerusalem's head is Yahvé]. | If ye confide not, verily ye shall not abide. || \*

\* *and within sixty-five years Ephráim is broken, no longer a nation.* ||

The observation, ver. 1, that the intention of these kings was not as a matter of fact carried out, is here merely by the way, since it really interrupts the thread of the narrative (comp. something similar xx. 1). It appears also as if the intention of the remark was to give prominence at the outset to the folly of the fear which prevailed in Jerusalem; for the addition is clearly made because subsequently the event fully confirmed Yesaya's announcement. In the continued use of the singular number of the verbs, ver. 1, is implied that the Syrian king was generally considered to be the more powerful of the two, and the king of Samaria as not much more than his vassal. The reason why Yesaya was directed to go to the place indicated outside a gate on the north of Jerusalem, is probably no other than that Ahaz was generally unwilling to appear in public, but now probably desired to examine the walls of the weakest side of the city and make preparations against a siege, induced to do so by blind fear (comp. xxii. 8-11); but as appears from ver. 13 sq., he had gone out with many other like-minded servants of his royal house. The fact that Yesaya had to take with him his son, whom (as must have been fully explained in the piece which has perished) he had named *the remnant will be converted*, had manifestly the object, that the presence of the boy should again call to remembrance the divine and comforting thought which was implied in his presence and life—the thought, that there was a sure hope for Israel at least in the future,

\* Ge.m. *Glaubet ihr nicht, ja so bleibet ihr nicht.*

comp. x. 21.—Circumspection and calmness is so much the easier, it is said ver. 4, inasmuch as the enemies do indeed burn with anger, but not like a new brand which may burn for a long time and consume a great deal, they, on the contrary, are no more than two ends of burnt-out smoking brands. Rather because they have formed plans which are as wicked as they are vain, nothing that they purpose shall according to the will of Yahvé in anywise come to pass; otherwise the world of these three kingdoms, which have been thus brought into comparison, would have to be revolutionised, and those two would not have their well-known capitals and kings, and Yuda would have neither Jerusalem for its capital nor Yahvé himself for its king! But in order that all this may come to pass according to the will of God, there is needed on the part of the threatened inhabitants of Jerusalem *confidence*, firm trust in Yahvé, faith in his word; and sad will it be if there is no firm *confidence*! in that case, it is certain there would be no firm *continuance*, no deliverance; a play on the thought and the word (see Vol. I. p. 69).

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Vv. 2 and 19 נִיחַ is exactly like the Arabic *anāḥa* with *bi*—, Hamāsa, p. 536, 10 sq.

Ver. 8, the last member is in this connexion clearly out of place, and disturbing to the thought; it destroys the pregnant brevity and the uniformity of the sentences; in any case it must come after the first member of ver. 9, inasmuch as the mention of Ephraim first occurs there; and the thought itself, is both incongruous in this connexion and contradicts the subsequent words ver. 16, by specifying the long period of 65 years. At the same time, the sentence has the genuine early Hebrew and early prophetic ring; and the period of 65 years, *i.e.*, a little less than a a life-time,\* before the end of a man's

\* Just as 1005 in the narrative, 1 Kings v. 12, is clearly intended to denote as a round number simply *something more than 1000*.

existence, may be conceived as proposed by a prophet as a round number, equally as well as the well-known 70 years of Yéremyá, comp. also Ez. iv. 5. The most natural supposition, therefore, is that these words were found in an early oracle of some prophet, and were originally, on account of the similarity of their meaning, placed simply in the margin ; comp. further on this passage, Vol. I. p. 304.

On the other hand we have every reason to suppose that the bracketed words, ver. 9, have accidentally slipped out of the text, and must be restored for the sake of the sense. We should otherwise have to take the כִּי, ver. 8, with the LXX, as meaning *but*, and interpret the word as saying, In reference to the great change which the two kings purpose to make, everything shall, on the contrary, remain as it is, Jerusalem shall not be their capital and they shall not be its heads ! But even this meaning, which would be moreover somewhat insipid, could only with difficulty be found in the words. It is therefore, better to separate the sentences with כִּי and supply the above words : the words which would be suitable here must be few and forcible !

#### vii. 10—17.

Since Ahaz hesitates to give his answer, Yesaya, impressed with the importance of the matter, goes further and does his utmost to inspire him with faith and confidence : he offers to give him any external sign which he may wish of the truth of the promise from Yahvé, however difficult and far off the sign may be, whether in hell or in heaven. For it would indeed be desirable that the pure divine word, where it is manifest, should at once suffice for every emergency, and should have inherent power to produce faith and confidence. But in actual life it is only too often the case that the mind of men is too much confused and their courage too weak to permit them to yield up themselves to the pure force of the word : it is then that the sign comes in with its palpable meaning to aid



human weakness. The sign is a sign, or token, of the truth which has been uttered, a prelude and beginning of the promised matter, a likeness in lower and sensible things which points to corresponding higher things that have not yet entered the world of sense ; it is at the same time a proof that that Spirit who grants this prefigurement and prelude will also bring to pass at the right time that which has been only guaranteed or promised by him. If therefore, for instance, some one who had expressed his desire to assist a country, should meet the unbelief of his hearers by proving before their eyes upon some individual of their number his power to help, he would be able to appeal to this as a sign, and he would attract the attention of all. Just as a person who has long been inwardly prepared for a great event, nevertheless often gladly looks for some external indication, or preliminary instigation, corresponding to the matter and seeming to him to supply a pledge of success (Judges ch. vi.). It is true enough that there is no real inward connexion between an external sign and the truth ; and as the sign does not necessarily produce belief in the truth, the whole attention may easily be absorbed upon the mere external, remarkable, and wonderful aspects of the sign. The desire to supply a sign may become in the case of the prophet jugglery, and to see one, in the case of the people, simple curiosity. Indeed, in the latter case, it may become obduracy against the truth itself, when the people, who might perceive the truth without a sign, reject it by demanding as the condition of its acceptance, a sign, and perhaps one of the strangest which has no connexion with the matter itself. Hence even in the Old Testament the principle is laid down, that men may not tempt God, *i.e.* may not demand from him in an improper way things or signs with reference to which they either doubt, or ought to doubt, whether he will grant them in the form in which they were demanded, ver. 12 ; Exodus xvii. 2, 7 ; Deut. vi. 16. Nevertheless, notwithstanding these imminent dangers and very early abuses, primitive antiquity was especially the time



when an assistance of this kind could hardly be dispensed with. Insight into higher spiritual things was at that time too uncommon, faith in truths at a distance from the common life of man was too weak, and the great prophets stood so much alone that they were probably often compelled to stoop to supply signs and tokens, in order first to arouse the faith and to prepare the minds of their hearers to enable them to perceive higher things. In the case of some prophets this might easily grow into a custom; and it is precisely Yesaya, the prophet who both illuminates and illustrates by examples any subject with such impressive force and also carries the weak and resisting along with him, that loves, both at or without his hearers' request, to supply such signs, and to connect this special exertion with his proper prophetic work, xxxvii. 30; xxxviii. 7, 22. There is no doubt but this was an exertion, for in those cases in which the sign is not promised as one which will appear in the future, in the natural course of things, as, for instance, vii. 14, sq.; xxxvii. 30, it must have cost no little effort to supply this external supplement and show-piece on the spot. And the more Ahaz was led astray by his false prophets, evidently the more Yesaya made vigorous efforts in this direction also to bring him to a better faith (see on vii. 11).

In the present instance therefore, Yesaya endeavoured to put forth all his energies and make use of the most extreme measures to overcome the serious unbelief of Ahaz. The king is asked to request a sign from Yahvé, of some kind or other, inasmuch as the prophet fully hopes that that God who impels him to proclaim the urgent truth, will also give him power to grant the sign which Ahaz may call for. In all cases a sign, a supplied proof, lays a moral obligation upon him that requests it: when, however, a tried and acknowledged prophet offers to supply a proof, when in reality it is not necessary, and puts forth his utmost energies, it is certainly, to say the least, nothing more than reasonable that he to whom this offer is made should not reject the proffered method by which he may

discover the truth. If he were to decline it, it could only be because he entertained a secret dread of the truth, and on that account spurned the way to it which had been very mercifully proposed. In that case he would really fall into a double error, and by his hopelessly invincible unbelief would excite the prophet's displeasure, and, without doubt, plunge himself into still greater errors and misery. It appears very soon that Ahaz is really in this deplorable condition: because from the very first he is too weak to possess pure faith and divine courage, he declines, with a miserable excuse, to request a sign, thereby displaying nothing but the true and irremediable condition of his soul.

And the prophet cannot hold his peace nor withdraw, because Ahaz, from a cowardly unbelief, withdraws. Divine truth cannot be mistaken, and asserts itself with the greater energy precisely when men intentionally decline to receive it: Yahvé must unsolicited give a sign which Ahaz is unwilling to see. The sign, however, will now be of a different kind from what it would have been had he evinced faith and fidelity at this decisive moment: this sign confirms what had been previously promised, and proclaims a happy event which the king had not looked for, and which shall nevertheless come against his will; but it also proclaims a calamity which he by faith and fidelity might have averted, and which now becomes the necessary punishment of his unbelief and resistance. The sign becomes in more than one respect a marvellous symbol of the true unfolding of the future, which no resistance on the part of Ahaz can withstand.

For the Messianic views and hopes, which in the case of Yesaya especially are the important stays and supports of all his conceptions of the future, of themselves contain by their very nature much that is wonderful, which may easily assume the form of a more definite conception of particular important signs and divine tokens of the future. It is indeed true that the great changes and forms of the future must properly arise

according to their own inner necessity, without respect, therefore, to a Messiah. Without him, it is still certain, that the eternal, divine work will be carried on. It no less appears from the condition of affairs at the time through what vicissitudes and in what stages the prophet must have thought the attainment of the final divine end would be effected. If (1) the future blessedness and perfection of the divine kingdom is to be hoped for, a perfection which Yesaya, like all the prophets of those centuries, conceived as not very distant, which their prophetic aspirations probably delighted to discern on the fringe of the horizon of their lives; if then (2) Yesaya everywhere insists upon the truth that this very consummation can never come in the midst of the serious transgressions of that age, but that a grand destruction of the prevailing wickedness must precede it, in order that a perfect state of things might spring out of the existing untenable condition,—a destruction which the prophet could then imagine only as brought about by the Assyrians, and not by Damascus and Ephráim:—if these two points were fixed, Yesaya must (3) have further supposed, that this great destruction would not take place at once in the immediate future, but that instead of it there would be deliverance from the danger which was threatening from Damascus and Ephráim. These are, therefore, the three stages in which the course of the future must have appeared to his mind, and his last experience of the conduct of the king could only make his conception of them still more vivid: first, deliverance from the present danger, a wonderful, divine salvation, in spite of all the fear and unbelief of Ahaz; then subsequently the great Assyrian conquest and destruction, rendered all the more necessary as a chastisement of the whole land and especially of the royal house by the fact that both have become entirely perverse and estranged from the true faith; finally, the great long-promised prosperity of the nation after it has been tried and regenerated by the great affliction. At the same time, although all this is true without a Messiah, it is not

Yesaya's habit to conceive it taking place without him. This prophet always conceives of the Messiah as a chief member of the blessed age, and precisely at this moment of most intense excitement the thought of the certain existence and of the appearance of this king, the diametrical opposite of the weak and unworthy king before him, flashes through his soul, and in a moment there stands before his mind the bright picture showing how the coming of the Messiah, whose coming cannot be doubted, although no one has visibly seen him, will be related to these stages of the veiled future, and how he will impress upon his age the divine signs and indications of his appearance even before the great time of the consummation of prosperity. At this moment all this appears suddenly to Yesaya to be quite natural, although it is really a tremendous stride, or rather leap, of the prophetic imagination, that it should conceive the gradual rise of the Messiah, his birth, his youth, and his coming to maturity, in the closest connexion with the above three stages of the future; for the Messiah is the representative of the nation in all its highest relations. Accordingly (1) the birth of the Messiah falls in the not very distant period of deliverance from the present peril, as if this minor deliverance were a prelude, and as it were, the first glimmerings of the great general deliverance to be looked for in the third stage; and it is indeed fitting that at the birth of the Messiah, who is to appear fully at the time of the great deliverance, the first beams of the great light should flash through the world, since the light must subsequently return in his manhood, and, having become perfect, remain for ever. The fact that a child who is to be the Messiah comes into the world, is of itself the commencement and possibility of complete perfection, the first dawn of the bright day: accordingly on his very entrance into the world he must announce himself as an uncommon child; and, born under wonderful conditions, inasmuch as a light of divine deliverance then flashes upon men, he must become by his birth and the name he receives a



pledge of his future high destination. On the other hand, he cannot come earlier, and until this period no child can bear the name *God-with-us*. (2) As it is proper that the child which is destined to such high prosperity should also share the sufferings which the whole nation through its own fault suffers under, his youth falls in the time of the great destruction and degeneracy of the land, and he suffers like all his fellow countrymen, in this time of trial and transition. But of course (3) his manhood falls in the time of the great prosperity, of which he is the real stay and protection. And thus his own and his nation's happiness and prosperity spring forth and grow in inseparable connexion through all vicissitudes.

Now, just as the flash of this prophetic glimpse darts through the prophet's mind, the marvellous signs which Yahvé will give to the present king on precisely this mysterious history of the *Coming One*, the man and king of the future, also present themselves clearly to his vision; certain strange tokens, occurring with reference to a child which will soon be born, shall at the right time be given to Ahaz, whether he wishes to see them or not. These are the attesting marks of the birth and the youth of that wonderful child. They are given that the king may perceive how certainly deliverance is at hand in the immediate future, and how vain is his present fear, but that he may at the same time perceive how great the distant calamity is which he will bring upon his land by his present resistance of Yahvé and what is good, and how certainly Yahvé will punish him in the future. A sign or a description from the third stage of the whole future and of the life of the child, has no place in this connexion, where rather the calamity and the punishment which he will bring upon himself and his land, together with the deliverance from the immediate danger, must be shown to Ahaz; and though the punishment of his unbelief may be delayed, it is all the more certain that it will come in the somewhat distant future. The description of the manhood of the boy and of the blessed age is supplied subsequently, viii. 23—ix. 6.



Yesaya knows that he cannot hold long discourses, at all events in the presence of this king ; his words must be shorter in this case than they were before even, vv. 4-9. But he neither can nor will do more than point to signs which God himself will give to him, although he is unwilling to see them. It thus follows naturally that the signs which the prophet declares against the will of Ahaz must be presented in as brief, abrupt, and pointed a form as is possible : the more briefly and pointedly they can be framed the better ; they must take the obtuse hearer by surprise, and arouse him from his insensibility ; only a few words can be spared having immediate reference to Ahaz himself, for the purpose of necessary explanation, ver. 17 sq.

10 And Yahvé spoke further to Ahaz thus : || “ Ask for thee a sign from Yahvé thy God, going deep down to hell or high into heaven ! ” || But Ahaz said “ I will not ask nor tempt Yahvé ! ” || Then said he : hear now ye of David’s house ! | is it too little to you to weary men, that ye also weary my God ? || Therefore will the Lord himself give you a sign : | lo the young-woman will conceive and bear a son, and then calleth his name *With-us-God*. || Cream and honey will he eat | when he will know to refuse the evil and to choose the good. || — For before the boy knoweth to refuse the evil and to choose the good, | the land will be desolated before whose two kings thou art alarmed. || — Yahvé will bring upon thee and upon thy people and thy father’s house days which have not come since Ephraïm revolted from Yuda, | the king of Assyria ! ||

To desire not to tempt God, ver. 12, is certainly laudable, when it is prompted by an effort of self-control, but in the

present case, when it serves, for want of a better, as a pure excuse for unbelief, it includes a two-fold transgression, as the prophet immediately explains, ver. 13, namely, contempt of the human endeavour of the prophet, of his care and earnest zeal, and, which is much more important, contempt and grieving of the divine spirit itself, of the God of the prophet, who was just about to put forth all his power at this moment through the prophet for the purpose of helping the king. For it was evident, and the prophet himself felt it, that in offering a sign he exerted his spiritual powers to the utmost, and determined with all his force to let the God work through him. Nothing could cause him greater pain than that Ahaz then desired with his hollow, and, indeed, Pharisaical, excuses, to retreat from the Divine when it summoned up its utmost forces to lead him into the right way. But Yahvé cannot be thwarted: if men will not receive what he mercifully offers to them, he still presents it, only in the form in which the rebellious deserve it; a sign will be given by him without solicitation, which brings the good that Ahaz would not accept by his free choice, ver. 14, but also a great evil, which he now doubly deserves, ver. 15. When she, who is now a young woman, *i.e.* marriageable, shall conceive and bear a son, which may very well take place within the space of a year, she will call the new-born child by the name *With-us-God*, we feel marvellously Yahvé's help (and the new-born child, born at the time of such an unexpected manifestation of divine deliverance, as upon the first stage of the new reformed era, bears in himself the eternal hope of the kingdom, is the young Messiah at the first stage of his development, viii. 8, 10; ix. 5). But in an equally strange manner he will eat cream and honey as he approaches the period of his youth, when he enters upon the time of maturer growth (Manu 2. 212), when he is some 10 to 20 years old. Dost thou know what that signifies? I will briefly indicate it. Before the boy enters upon this riper age, a few years from the present time, therefore, the allied Damascus and Ephráim will be already

desolated, so little are these two kings able to conquer Jerusalem, and so certainly is a divine deliverance immediately in prospect for this land, ver. 16 in explanation of ver. 14, only that the same image is preserved to a certain extent. But, which especially belongs here to be dealt with further, Yahvé will bring subsequently a great punishment upon thee and the whole land, days of calamity such as have not been experienced for centuries, namely, the Assyrian king, who when he has finished the destruction of the northern countries, will come to Yuda, ver. 17 in explanation of ver. 15. Accordingly nothing is in reality said, ver. 14, as to the nature of the mother of the Messiah, since the young-woman is mentioned only in antithesis to the immature girl, in order to indicate the time; indeed, there is nothing said as to who the young-woman was, whose wife, of what family, because it has nothing to do with the connexion, and we can only conclude from xi. 1, that the prophet, like Mikha, conceived of the Messiah as coming from the stock of David. But every interpretation is equally false which does not perceive that the prophet is here speaking of the developing Messiah, of him, therefore, to whom the land and the kingdom properly belongs, and with the thought of whom the heart of the prophet leaps in blessed hope, viii. 8; ix. 5 sq.

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Ver. 11, הַנְּבִיאִים and הַנְּבִיאִים are infinitive absolutes, acc. § 280, and for that reason alone the Massôrites cannot have considered הַנְּבִיאִים as the imperative instead of הַנְּבִיאִים, which would besides destroy the structure of the verse members. Neither can it stand for הַנְּבִיאִים, simply on account of the pause, as appears from § 93 *a*; but mainly on account of the harmony of sound with הַנְּבִיאִים the *ô* is changed into an *â*. It is moreover unmistakable that when Yesaya mentions, and, indeed, in the first place, a sign from Hell, it is done only because he well knew, acc. viii. 19, how greatly Ahaz preferred his necromancers and other false prophets of the same kind, and, as it were, for the purpose of rivalling them, whose arts he did not fear. Thus

was repeated the ancient contest between Moses and the Egyptian magicians! Comp. Sur. vi. 35. But in what way Yesaya would have waged the contest had the king accepted the challenge, it is now impossible to say.

In ver. 13 sq. it is obvious that the prophet is perfectly able to moderate his words, although it is the very moment when his righteous anger is burning hotly: instead of addressing the king exclusively, he turns intentionally to the *house of David*, or the court which attended the king, and which was in a certain sense the same as what is now called the government. Yet ver. 16 sq. the *thou* recurs with equal propriety.

In ver. 14 it must be especially remembered that הַעַלְמָה, *the young-woman*, forms the antithesis of both the *girl*, as the not yet marriageable child, and the *old woman*; but at least in such a serious and accurate discourse as this, the married woman, although she may be young, cannot be intended; however, the use of the article, *the young-woman*, follows naturally in this connexion, acc. § 277 a, from these antitheses, and it would be absurd to think it was used to point out some particular, and in so far definite, young women who might be standing near. It is, therefore, the indication of the time of this birth which the prophet primarily aims at; and it is only from the entire sense of the two members of the sentence that the thoughtful hearer can discover that the Messiah is intended. In fact, it would not have been easy to discover the reference to the Messiah from the words alone, unless his coming had long since been foretold, with sufficient clearness and publicity, by Yesaya and other prophets. It is the special manner and certainty of his coming from the first conceivable moment of his entrance into the world, that is the new element in this passage. Nothing can be more preposterous than to imagine that the prophet intended by the young-woman a wife of the king's, or even his own. Comp. further, *Jahrbücher der Bibl. Wiss.* I. p. 43 sq., VI. p. 102. On לְדַעְתּוֹ ver. 15, as indicating the time of the action, see § 217 d. As, however, the language



is here everywhere remarkably pliant and apt, a new definition of time is immediately connected with it, ver. 16. But since the rapid language at the close hastens especially to the threatening portion of the discourse, which is still kept back and yet must necessarily be uttered, this is at length, ver. 17, introduced with great abruptness. It might be supposed that the words **את מלך אשור** both here and ver. 20; viii. 7, are an ancient gloss: but the occurrence of the same words three times is of itself remarkable, and the addition **ואת כל כבדו** viii. 7, is quite Yesayan; in addition, the explanation is in point of meaning correct, for in ver. 18 Egypt is mentioned with Assyria merely because it might be surmised that Egypt would not quietly suffer the Assyrian to occupy Yuda, whilst it was equally easy to foresee that the Assyrians would nevertheless ultimately alone prevail, comp. ver. 20; viii. 7 sq., and all the other oracles of Yesaya's. And if such an explanatory addition or parenthesis would not be allowable in poetry, no one can object to it when used by a prophet as a speaker. The discourse is here evidently unusually abrupt at the close, because the prophet hastens to bring even it to a conclusion, knowing well what and to whom he is speaking, and is already at the point of leaving the king in haste.

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(4.) ——— Ch. vii. 18—viii. 4.

Thou wilt not hope or expect anything divine, although the time itself is of so unusual a nature? Well, then, hear something which is incomparably more marvellous than thou wilt now believe, and which will take place in spite of thy unbelief both for thy unexpected deliverance as well as for thy distress! Yesaya had thus spoken to Ahaz, who was so deaf to every earnest word; in brief impressive terms the prophet had even proclaimed, as far as this could be done to such an unwilling hearer, the truth which was most fitted to be of immediate use. But when this was done his stay could not be prolonged: and



Ahaz would scarcely have suffered him to remain longer in his presence. It is of itself inconceivable that the following words, vv. 18-25, were a continuation of his address to the king, and they do not show a single trace of having been uttered in his presence.

We must therefore suppose that between ver. 17 and ver. 18 something has been lost. We ought to have here an announcement that Yesaya left the king; probably also that he then went quietly home with his boy, and that from that time he commenced at every opportunity to set forth and to prove more fully, to a circle who would better understand him, the same surmisings and truths which Ahaz would not hear. It is probable that several particulars were recorded here in a form which may be gathered from such passages as viii. 19. But the prophet must especially have seized an opportunity to explain more particularly the name 'Immanûel, vii. 14, and to give prominence to the certain coming of the Messiah. This follows from viii. 8-10, where there is such an emphatic retrospective reference to 'Immanûel that the expression there used in such a rapid manner is by no means explained, simply from the almost enigmatical words, vii. 14. It follows also from Mikha, v. 2, where the Messiah's mother and his relation to a greater part of his brothers, *i.e.* fellow-countrymen, are mentioned in such a manner that we must suppose a reference to a detailed description by an earlier prophet, who could have been no other than Yesaya, inasmuch as he first spoke of a mother of the Messiah. It follows, finally, from the passage which has been preserved as

vii. 18-25.

For this fragment has all the appearance of being the last strophe of a longer piece on the Messiah, which is amply descriptive and serves as a further explanation of the words, vv. 15, 17. But we may say with truth, that if Yesaya thus deemed the second of the two signs, mentioned in this order,

vv. 14, 15, needed more particular elucidation, he must with still greater certainty have further explained in a similar piece the first sign concerning 'Immanûel and his mother, and precisely here before ver. 18.

For on that day will Yahvé hiss hither the flies which are on the uttermost streams of Egypt, | and the bees which are in the land of Assyria; || they come and encamp all of them in the valleys of the mountain-walls and in the clefts of the rocks, | and in all thorn-hedges and in all pastures. ||

20 On that day will the Lord shave with the razor of the one hired beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet; | and also the beard it taketh away. || — And on that day will a man keep a young cow and two sheep; || and because they give much milk he will eat cream, | for cream and honey will every one eat that remaineth in the land. || And on that day will every place where are a thousand vines for a thousand silverlings, | — it will be for the thorns and the thistles; || with arrows and bow will men come thither, | for thorn and thistle will the whole land

25 be. || And all the mountains which are hoed with a hoe, thither will the fear of thorns and thistles not come, || but it will be a free pasture of the ox, and a place to be trodden of the sheep. ||

Vv. 18-25. Inasmuch as the rapid and brief explanation, ver. 17, could not embrace the unusual figure of eating cream and honey, ver. 15, because this requires a more circumstantial elucidation; and since the second half of the sign, the half announcing the punishment, no less needed further expansion;

the detailed explanation of these things follows, with freer treatment, in a special strophe. As easily and quickly as a bee-master calls his bees with hisses (v. 26) will Yahvé, ver. 18, call up into Yuda to battle the armies of the two great countries which are so jealous of each other—all the most injurious, stinging and tormenting creatures, the flies, or rather gadflies, the symbol of Egypt, in which such creatures abound, the Egyptian soldier, therefore, even from the extreme limits of the land, and the troops of Assyria (Deut. i. 44; vii. 20. Ps. cxviii. 12). They will not be slow to come, and then quickly settle down in the land in vast multitudes, just as the swarms of flying insects, these gadflies and wasps, at certain times cover all the damp and lower portions of the country, ver. 19. Then the entire land will be devastated, as if it were eaten off, or rather shaved quite bald, and lose its ornament and adornment, just as when every hair has been shaved off a man, from top to toe, also the ornament of the beard, as if Yahvé had for this purpose hired the razor beyond the Euphrates, as an earthly king hires soldiers from foreigners to use them for his own purposes, the razor being in this case, the merciless king of Assyria, ver. 20.—When the land of Yuda is thus totally devastated, it must again become uncultivated and waste, full of thorns and thistles instead of its present valuable vineyards and cornfields, v. 6; xxxii. 13 sq.; the few persons who are then left in the land need keep only a few milch animals, since in such a country the wild pasturage will be everywhere free, and, in conformity with this wild condition, they will be able to live upon cream and honey alone, perhaps also to a small extent from the chase, which will then be everywhere free, ver. 24; husbandry is not to be thought of, there is not even *the fear of thorns and thistles* in those places which are now most carefully by hoeing preserved from them, thorns and thistles are allowed anywhere to grow up undisturbed. And in this way therefore the young Messiah, who has not yet appeared but will not fail to come, will also share as one of this

few the mournful lot of his land, will eat cream and honey as he grows to manhood, and the marvellous sign will be fulfilled in his own person.

In ver. 20 one might be led to suppose that *הַשִּׁכִּירָה*, as a simple passive participle, formed acc. § 149e, and construed acc. § 335a, was a *razor which is hired beyond the Euphrates*. But the flow of the words is smoother, if the word, newly formed acc. § 166a, denotes *the hired army* itself, so that its razor, as it is here called instead of *sword* merely on account of the prevailing figure, is the king himself, as the further explanation itself adds.

With regard to ver. 23 comp. *Dichter des A.B.* ii. p. 414, 2nd ed.; and on ver, 25, comp. v. 2, 6, it may be again remarked that the words *יראת לא רבוא* — cannot be understood in any other sense.

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#### Other signs, viii. 1-4.

Whilst the prophet had in vain endeavoured to inspire the king with faith and a good courage he lost (as we said) no opportunity of otherwise illustrating and establishing in every possible way the same great truths. He endeavoured, especially to present and impress upon every one in the clearest way by means of new signs the truth most needed at that time, namely, that there was nothing to fear from the two allied kings, but that they would themselves soon see their own capitals conquered. Two opportunities of this kind which then presented themselves are here briefly subjoined. In the first place, a prophet, when his contemporaries will not at once understand him, consigns with confidence the truth of his words to the future to be thereby attested. A natural method of doing this is, that he exhibits them in writing at the market-place, having first reduced them into a brief and expressive sentence. Every one may read this sentence, and lay to heart its meaning, and in the end the fulfilment of his words may give to them



additional force, comp. xxx. 8 ; Hab. ii. 2. At that time nothing was of such importance as to hold fast the truth, that Damascus and Samaria would soon be themselves taken, and that there was already one at hand who was not in the habit of waiting long to fetch the prey assigned to him, this is, the Assyrian. Accordingly Yesaya sets up in the presence of witnesses a public monumental tablet to *Quick-robbery*, *Hasty-booty*, or (as may be equally well said) *Robbery-quick*, *Booty-hasty*, the meaning of which every one should lay to heart, and look for the early fulfilment of the prophecy which was thus clearly given. Proper names formed in this way from entire sentences take readily a double meaning: *Quickrobbery* may declare that something will be quickly robbed, or may indicate the person who is quick in robbing. In the latter sense the name may therefore point to the Assyrian: but inasmuch as the first thing in the prophet's mind is the deliverance of Jerusalem by the sacking of the two cities of the enemy, he forms two names of a similar signification in allusion to the two kingdoms. In the second place, he gave this same newly coined name of the age to a son who was born at that time, in order that the divine certainty that Jerusalem, *i.e.* the community of true religion, enjoyed secure protection, might also be perpetuated in the life of this son of his, and be constantly brought up again into the memory by his name. These two facts concerning this new name with its two applications are so briefly narrated that its signification is not explained before the end of both narratives, ver. 4. The significant name of the prophet's older son was referred to, p. 74.

## VIII.

1 And Yahvé said to me: "take thee a large tablet | and write thereon in popular characters *Bootyquick's Spoilsspeedy's*, || and I will take me as faithful witnesses the priest Uria and Zakharya



son of Yebérékhyáhu.” || And I approached the prophetess and she conceived and bare a son ; then said Yahvé to me : “ call his name *Booty-quick Spoilspeedy* ;” || for before the boy will have knowledge to say my father ! my mother ! | they shall carry away Damascus’s wealth and Samaria’s booty before the Assyrian king. ||

The new name, vv. 1, 3, denotes properly *he of the speedy booty of the quick robbery*, construed acc. § 288c, the greatest brevity combined with the greatest clearness being desired in names ; on מִהֵר see § 240 e. To this name is further prefixed, ver. 1, the לָּ, as in all inscriptions, acc. § 292 a, properly monument of the (des) . . . . comp. Ez. xxxvii. 16. Yesaya must also write the few letters upon a great tablet in *popular characters* (*leuteschrift*), i.e. large and plain, that every one may read the inscription easily ; the name הָרַט אָנוֹשׁ indicates most likely the opposite of the literary character, which the learned only could read, and which probably by that time was already distinguished from the general popular character by its brevity and smallness. Lastly, witnesses are used at the erection of a monument, in order that it may be subsequently known by whom and when it was erected ; and Yesaya could not choose two better historical witnesses than Uria, who acc. 2 Kings xvi. 10 sq. was then High Priest, and Zakharya, who, to judge from his being associated here with Uria, was probably at that time the mayor of Jerusalem (that he was a prophet is the baseless supposition of some moderns). That Yesaya carried out all these directions is too much a matter of course to need to be mentioned.

The manner of narration, ver. 3, would be interpreted too rigidly, if it should be supposed that וַאֲתָרַב describes an action which occurred immediately after ver. 2 : but vv. 3, 4, as regards their facts, are distinct from the foregoing verses, and

it seemed to the later time when all this was written unnecessary to supply the special dates of the different actions mentioned here; it was enough that conception, birth, and naming occurred generally at that time, and nothing more definite is conveyed by the indications of time chosen. The definition of time in ver. 4 agrees in a general way with that of vii. 14; and both of Yesaya's sons, the one mentioned here, and the elder one, vii. 7, with their significant names are intended, ver. 18.

### 5. Conclusion. VIII. 5—IX. 6.

What the prophet has further to say, partly new and partly by way of conclusion to what has gone before, he finally collects into three strophes, which are in the form of a discourse rather concerning than to the mass of the people. Unhappily the people, putting out of view their seducers, the false prophets, are not at this time of trial without blame; and yet not only is deliverance from the immediate danger certain, but the great final Messianic deliverance is equally so; indeed, it is guaranteed by a multitude of signs and precious pledges. Thus this closing discourse continues to sway hither and thither with the ebb and flow of the most varied emotions, till at last all the storms of agitated feeling are laid to rest in exclusive remembrance of the divine certainty of eternal blessedness. Because the people cherished a secret satisfaction at the progress of the two allied kings (see p. 76 sq.), they must suffer in the future a severe and deserved punishment from the Assyrian conquest, but there is nothing to fear from the present dangers, since in general, as Yesaya has again on this occasion himself most vividly experienced within his own soul, there is in Israel an inexhaustible salvation the moment they yield not to the common, but to the true and higher fear, the fear of Yahvé, lest they fall in the time of trial, vv. 6-15. With trust in all these truths and signs and pledges of the eternal salvation, the prophet is able to calmly look into the future; but they who now build

upon vain things and false prophets, will one day, when the great destruction comes upon the land, in vain wish that they had followed these truths, vv. 16-22. Nevertheless, in spite of all the present darkness, which is to some extent already at hand and partly still threatening, the final approach of the blessed time with all its glory is certain, and even now the longing heart beats joyfully a welcome to it, ver. 23—ix. 6.

### VIII.

5 And Yahvé spoke further unto me thus:

#### 1.

Because this people scorneth the softly flowing waters of Silóah | and with joy followeth Ressîn and the son of Remalyáhu: || therefore then will the Lord bring over them the great and mighty waters of the Euphrates—the Assyrian king and all his glory; | which mounteth then over all its channels, and passeth over all its banks, || striketh into Yuda overflowing and rolling, reaching to the neck, | and the outstretchings of its wings will fill the breadth of thy land *O With-us-God!* || — Be enraged nations and—despair, and give heed all ye far-off lands! | equip you and—despair, equip you and despair! || form a plan—then it it will be broken, | speak a word—then it will not stand! for *with us is God.* || — For thus said Yahvé unto me in the ecstasy | and warned me not to walk in the way of this people: || Ye shall not call everything rebellion which this people calleth rebellion, | and what it feareth neither fear nor dread: || Yahvé of Hosts—him shall ye hallow, | and *he* shall be your fear and he your dread! ||

He will indeed be both for a sanctuary | and for a stone of offence and for a rock of stumbling to the two houses of Israel, | for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; || and many  
 15 among them will stumble | and fall and break their limbs, and be snared and taken. ||

2.

“Roll up the oracle, | seal the doctrine by my disciples!” || Thus will I wait for Yahvé who hideth his face from Yaqob’s House, | and hope in him; || I myself and the children which Yahvé hath given me are for signs and for omens in Israel | on the part of Yahvé of Hosts, who dwelleth on the Ssion-mountain. || — And when they say unto you “Apply to the ghosts and to the soothsayers, that chirp and that mutter:” | (do not the people apply to their gods, instead of the living to the dead?) ||—“for doctrine and for oracle!” | yes thus will he say who hath no daybreak; || then he runneth through bowed down and hungry, | yet when he hungereth and fretteth himself, he curseth his king and God and gazeth upwards; || and to the earth he looketh: | yet there is distress and darkness, the gloomiest trouble—and into the blackness is he driven. ||

3.

Yet the land cannot be darkened which is distressed: | as the former time brought shame to Zabulon and to Naphtali, the latter also bringeth  
 IX. honour—towards the Sea, beyond the Yordan,

- 1 towards the Heathen-march; || the people that walketh in darkness seeth a great light, | they who dwell in the land of gloom—light shineth upon them; || thou multiplieth the generation, to it increasest the joy, | they rejoice before thee as men rejoice in the harvest, as they exult at the division of spoil. || For the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, | the rod of his driver thou breakest
- 5 as in Midian's days. || — Yea every boot of him that marcheth with noise, and the garment rolled in blood— | that will be for burning, for fuel of fire. || For a child is born to us, a son is given unto us, | and the government cometh upon his shoulder, | and they call his name *Wonderful-Counsellor Hero-God, Everlasting-Father Prince-of-Peace*: || for the increase of the government and for endless weal, | on behalf of David's throne and on behalf of his kingdom, | to sustain it and to support it by justice and by righteousness henceforth and for ever; | the zeal of Yahvé of Hosts will do this ! ||

1. The softly-flowing brook Silóah near Jerusalem is an image of the rule of the ancient Davídic house, which, however small it might be, was in comparison with other kingdoms of the time, very mild and gentle, Ps. xlv. 5; as, on the contrary, the Nile, with its monstrous animals, was the image of the cruel Egyptian rule; and the great Euphrates, with its frequent and widely-devastating overflowings, the image of the dangerous Assyrian power and its rapid extension, comp. xxvii. 1. Because, therefore, the multitude in Jerusalem now foolishly despises the gentle native rule, and takes pleasure in the progress of the two allied kings, Yahve will punish them



by causing the mighty, roaring and overwhelming Euphrates to come over the land, so that the water reaches to the neck of every one without any deliverance, xxx. 28, this flood being really the Assyrian king with all his dreadful, splendid army, whose widely extended wings cover the entire land, however wide it may be, yea, thy sacred land, thou surely expected, passionately longed-for, *With-us-God*! vv. 6-8.—But at this name (originally explained before according to p. 93), and the elevated thought which it conveys, the discourse, with a sudden spasmodic emotion, starts up with the overwhelming force of divine threatening to direct itself against all the heathen nations, including the Assyrians just mentioned. To you nations, not only of Damascus and Samaria, but to all Heathen however far off they may dwell, I say from God, and pay good heed to what concerns you: wax angry, prepare yourselves in your wrath for battle, lay plans and make great harangues as much as you like—ye shall nevertheless despair and see all your plans frustrated! as had already been said, vii. 5-7: for in Jerusalem is still an eternal, indestructible power and hope, with us is God, and soon that exalted man of the eternal hope, the Messiah, will be born under this name *With-us-God* whilst ye perish! vv. 9, 10. Thus the true meaning of the name 'Immanûel still keeps up its vibrations here, although the signification of the man's name as far as it denotes the Messiah as a child must have been previously given above.—If it is desired to know whence Yesaya derived confidence and assurance of such a lofty nature, he must reply that but recently in an hour of sacred ecstasy his spirit became again deeply alive in Yahvé to the true fear and strength, and, in opposition to the present conduct of the multitude, had heard for himself and his friends in this dangerous time the following divine warnings: (1) not to consider everything which the multitude called sedition and treason as really such, in general not to share that base fear which springs from pusillanimity and want of divine trust, ver. 12.

When the multitude, who are so easily led astray at the first appearance of confusion, discerns revolution and revolt, it is often, when considered calmly and closely, nothing of the sort, as now, *e.g.*, at the approach of the armies of Damascus and Samaria. (2) On the contrary, so much the more to hallow and fear Yahvé alone in every way, and to take serious care with reference to him and his will and his light, ver. 13, comp. xxix. 23. Indeed, it is He who on his part will be a sanctuary, an inviolable, always protecting asylum, if in this approaching time of severest temptations he is hallowed by his servants, ver. 14*a*, comp. Ez. xi. 16; 1 Kings ii. 28-30; but as they who in blind fear flee to an altar, which may serve as an asylum, may easily stumble and fall at its base, so the same Yahvé will be equally a touch-stone, a stone of offence and stumbling for the two kingdoms of Israel, and especially for the people of Jerusalem. And it may be surmised that many, who are moved by blind fear and not by the true fear of God, will in the approaching time of trial stumble upon this rock and irremediably injure themselves, or if they do not immediately fall in battle, will yet be caught as it were in fetters and led away captive, vv. 14*b*, 15; comp. further xxviii. 13, 16 sq. In fact, divine justice is something which is either observed, desired and attained, and is then men's weal; or, on the other hand, is overlooked, rejected, or sought after in a wild, unintelligent spirit and only in the hour of need, and is then their lasting ruin.

2. But enough of this; it is time to make an end. What the good have to do in this time has been explained sufficiently, and it seems to the Prophet that he hears the divine voice urging him to bring the whole matter to a conclusion, having written down, rolled up, and sealed the divinely imparted warning and doctrine, to preserve it carefully, that in the future it may serve as a witness to the truth at its fulfilment, ver. 16, comp. xxx. 8, Hosea xiii. 12. And at least the prophet will calmly hope in Yahvé in the threatening time of calamity:

indeed, he possesses from him external pledges also for the truth of the hopes and promises which sustain his soul, for he himself lives and moves, and the children which Yahvé has given to him live and move as living signs and prefigurations of the better future and the eternal hopes, which are also embodied in all their names, as was previously explained, ver. 17 (comp. *ante* p. 72 sq.). It may be seen from this that the name of the prophet must also have been explained in connexion with some weighty thought in a foregoing chapter, which has been lost.—But no help is to be looked for from the false prophets, magicians, and misleaders of the people of every kind (although the king and his courtiers at present believe in them); it is therefore said by way of addition: If you are exhorted instead of listening to the true divine word to apply to the oracle of the ghosts and necromancers, those deceivers who imitate by a chirping, sighing voice the tones of spirits, iii. 3; xxix. 4, do not pay attention to such people: for, first, it is not to be wondered at if such people, who are themselves spiritually dead and insensible to the truth, apply to dead gods instead of to the living God, in accordance with the universal law, that the gods are like the men and nations that worship them; and then—how greatly will they who now desire to know nothing of the true oracle wish to return to it when the dark horrible judgment-day takes from them the daybreak and all hope (xlvi. 11; Job xi. 17)! (a mass of thoughts very closely packed together, vv. 19, 20). But, alas, the wish is then too late: in extreme distress and afflicted with the pangs of starvation the man rushes as a maniac through the land, in the moment of his terrible anguish and exasperation curses indeed his god and lord whom he slavishly and yet vainly served, and directs his eyes upwards to the true God; but when he then looks down to the earth again because he had discerned no light above, he sees there the most dreadful darkness and distress, equally without any ray of light, without any hope, breaking through it, and thus he is again hunted

forth into the darkness, to perish therein! vv. 21, 22; v. 30; comp. especially Job xv. 22 sq.; xviii. 5-13.

3. But no, much higher than all present or future threatening dangers and distresses stands the certainty of the eternal Messianic prosperity, in the intuition of the glory of which the discourse now stops, and dwells upon it with such a deep and happy composure that the language even bears the clearest marks of it. As if he were describing something which he had long ago seen in his spirit as certain, the prophet presents every thing here, even in the unusual peculiarities of the language with the greatest composure, and only in one instance makes scarcely an exception from this at the new start in the middle, ix. 4. Thus the discourse first breaks out in contrast to the above impenetrable darkness of those who have turned away from Yahvé, with the thought, that nevertheless a light, and indeed a great light, will come: *no* (ii. 6) *darkening is not to the* (land ver. 21) *to which there is distress*, the sacred land can be distressed but not for ever darkened! on the contrary, even the northern and eastern portions of the kingdom of Ephraïm, 2 Kings xv. 29, which have been already rent away by the Assyrians, shall be again restored, and its future honour shall be as great as its shame from this Assyrian conquest, ver. 23. The poor people perishing in spiritual darkness and physical distress sees suddenly a great light, a wonderful deliverance ver. 1: happily prospering under Yahvé they exult with joy in the holy place (comp. Cant. vii. 3; Ps. lxviii. 13), that the Assyrian yoke has been broken by Yahvé, and that there has been a defeat of the Assyrians as great as that which once overtook Midian, vv. 2, 3, comp. x. 26; Judges vii. sq.—But in reality some day every trace of savage war and barbarity must be destroyed, every boot of the foreign soldier, striding in the noise of war proudly upon his boots, every red battle garment, as is said v. 4 in allusion to the ancient Mosaic custom at a victory over the Heathen (see *Alterthümer* p. 102 sq. (87 sq.):



for the everlasting peace must come, a pledge of which has been given us in the sure promise of a child, which, when he has grown up to take upon his shoulders the burden of government, then receives, instead of the short name of his childhood, 'Immanûel, the new double names, which convey the complete idea of his boundless greatness and glory : *Wonderful-Counsellor* (strictly wonder of Counsellor) *Herogod* (who as an invincible God fights and conquers x. 21), *everlasting Father* (maintainer of his subjects) *Prince-of-Peace* (who nevertheless never desires war and eternally established peace) ver. 5. It is a somewhat long name, but beautifully rounded and pleasant. It consists of two members, each member containing two names, while again each name is a compound. Thus as the ruler's name it forms a fitting antithesis to the child's name—'Immanûel. Inasmuch as the Egyptian and Assyrian kings had long been in the habit of placing the longest names upon their banners and elsewhere, as the Cæsars did subsequently, Yesaya might very well gather up the whole idea of this highest conceivable king into an artistic group of names of this kind ; and since even the kings at Jerusalem had long observed the custom of taking a new name at their ascension (see *History of Israel*, iii. 271 (iii. p. 371), Yesaya could foretell a similar act on the part of the Messiah.—This is all to take place in order that the true, eternal Divine kingdom with its prosperity may grow, a kingdom which appeared to the prophet capable of being combined with the Davîdic rule, if only it thoroughly recovered itself from its present decline by means of complete righteousness : but as this is included in the promotion of the eternal divine kingdom the true object of the entire work of God, it follows also that the zeal of Yahvé will do this and his promise may be confidently trusted, ver. 6.

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viii. 6 מְשֹׁשׁ אֶת cannot possibly mean the people trembles at the two kings, as if מְשֹׁשׁ were the same root as מָסַח to melt,



and this were the same as *to fear*: in any case the word must come from **פֶּחַד** or **פֶּחַד**, and its formation and construction must be explained from §. 240 *d* and §. 351 *c*. Inasmuch as the sudden fear of the people is represented as the same as that of the king, vii. 2, and its fear is here also severely condemned, viii. 12, the question might arise, whether **פֶּחַד** does not like **פֶּחַד** denote the violent agitation of both joy and alarm, so that in that case the word might here be construed with the sign of the accusative **לְ**: still the idea of a *leaping*, i.e., unrestrained joy predominates here too plainly. We must therefore consider that ver. 12 there is ascribed to the people the thought of the possibility of dethroning the Davîdic house, that in such a condition of affairs excessive fear is already verging upon treason to the royal house, and that Ahaz might very well have a powerful populace in the capital who would take pleasure in his discomfiture, which, quite regardless of the distant future, desired to use the present opportunity, with a scarcely veiled satisfaction at the progress of the Allies: **פֶּחַד** with **לְ** is then similar to **פֶּחַד** with **עַם**, Ps. l. 18. In fact, the antithesis conveyed by the paronomasia between **מָשׁוּשׁ** and **מָשׁוּשׁ** is thereby completely brought out; the LXX. also represent it in a loose way.

In viii. 9, 10, it should be carefully noted that Yesaya intends a reference to the Assyrians also, as he himself more distinctly indicates at the end of the piece, ix. 1-5; thus correctly did he glance even then into the more immediate as well as the more distant future. **יְהוָה** ver. 14 must be taken acc. §. 353 *a*, as the entire context requires.

viii. 19. Evidently two kinds of necromancers are distinguished, which their visitors were also necessitated to apply to in different houses and institutions: first such as imitated the voices of children or women, and second such as made dead men and old people speak. Yesaya with just satire denominates the first the *chirpers*, the second the *mutterers* (which **הִגְהָה** may very well mean in the *Hiph.*, which occurs

here only). We then see that אֲבוֹת was the technical name for the first, and יְדִעָתִי for the latter.

As to מִצָּדָה viii. 23 and מְעִיף ver. 22, which clearly are intended to correspond, comp. §. 215 *a*; we may accordingly derive מְעִיף 1 Sam. ii. 8 from מִצָּדָה which occurs elsewhere, as its meaning favours this. The combination מְעִיף צִדְקָה is acc. §. 313 *c*. The most remarkable thing in this verse is the wholly different manner of the discourse, which is perceivable at the very beginning of this last strophe: we find the certainty of the future expressed from the first in the *perf.*, as in ii. 9. 11 and the corresponding places. The וְ before אֲחִירֹן has therefore the force of *also*: but it is better to read גְּלִילָה גִּי' instead of גְּלִיל הַבֵּ' acc. §. 216 *b*, to give prominence to the mere local direction in agreement with the context; after this *a* the article is less necessary.—The particle לֹא ix. 2 *b*, which must here equal לוֹ must at the commencement of the sentence receive a certain emphasis.

The more closely one looks at the new and elevated name of the Messiah, ver. 5, the more convinced one must become that Yesaya has constructed it with great artistic skill. We must look upon it as the name which a new king assumed to be placed upon his shield, banners, or arms: it could not be allowed more than a limited space upon the shield, as one sees, for instance, from the figures on the shields of the early Egyptian kings. Much had to be expressed by it with the greatest brevity, and a great deal would depend upon the right combination and position of the component parts of the name. At that time the principle upon which names were constructed was the neat combination of two simple nouns, acc. §. 273 *d*; and these four as well as the earlier name Immanuel are composed of two words to each. If we then suppose this great fourfold name with its four members arranged so as to form a beautiful group thus—

Wonderful-Counsellor	Herogod	1.—2.
		×
Everlasting-Father	Prince of Peace	3.—4.

it is evident that in whatever direction, one may combine them in pairs, beginning with the first, a new and magnificent meaning is obtained. If they are connected in pairs (1) in the straightforward order, 1—2, 3—4, the first two describe what the nature of the Messiah must be subjectively considered, the second pair what it must be with regard to the world: personally the Messiah must possess the greatest measure both of counsel and decision and of power; with regard to the world, he must have an equal fulness of both inexhaustible provident paternal love (comp. xxii. 20; Gen. xlv. 8) and victorious pacificatory power. If (2) they are connected laterally 1—3, 2—4, the first describe the spirit accordingly to which he in thought always comes to the right conclusion, and the feeling according to which he suffers himself to be guided eternally purely by love, while the latter describe the power which he must have to give effect to his love, and the lofty work of founding and maintaining peace to perform which this power will be given him. Lastly, if they are connected diagonally, 1—4, 2—3, they prescribe, that peace alone may be the end and aim of the counsel and all spiritual endeavour, and that love alone may be the power. The unfailing stream of true counsel and decision must form the commencement, and peace as the true end, the conclusion of the whole, as Yesaya immediately again says, ver. 6. Characteristics which ought to be found combined in all kings, must be found in Him in the highest, *i.e.*, the divine, measure; and if an everlasting reign is desired for even the ordinary king (see on Ps. cx. 4), how much more must the idea of eternity be applicable to Him! And this is the final word, ver. 6. At this place at least, because it was most suitable according to the plan of this book, Yesaya determined only in great lapidary characters to pourtray Him whom the deepest feeling of his heart and life ran to meet, with wonderful desire and longing: and that he is a great master in this kind of style also, is evident enough.

In conclusion, it may also be remarked that the animation of

the language of ix. 3, which had its origin in the oppression of the Assyrians, points to the fact that this book did not receive its final shape before the commencement of the reign of Hizqia. It was not earlier than the end of the reign of Ahaz and the beginning of that of Hizqia that the Assyrian rule was felt as immediately oppressive by Yuda ; its insupportably heavy yoke is here described almost in the same language as in the later book, xxx. 31 sq., comp. x. 5 sq. It also appears from the historical narration of vii. 1, that Ahaz was not then alive. On the other hand, it is absolutely inadmissible to take a later date than quite the commencement of the next king's reign : which will also appear from the next book.

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### 3. A NEW ORACLE CONCERNING SAMARIA. xvii. 1-11.

As Yesaya concluded his first book with an oracle concerning Samaria also (see p. 50 sq.), he wished to attach to the second book a similar piece, which would serve at the same time in the form of a more general review to explain further what had been said with regard to the two kingdoms of Damascus and Samaria, ch. vii. and viii. although it was probably originally written earlier. It is true, this piece, xvii. 1-11, which has been inserted here, shows not only that the Assyrian conquest of the north-eastern portions of the kingdom of Samaria, 2 Kings xv. 19, was already past, comp. ver. 3, but also that the early fall of the Syrian kingdom of Damascus already presented itself to the mind of the prophet as certain. Now, according to 2 Kings xvi. 9, Tiglath Pileser took Damascus at the wish of Ahaz when he was in distress from the Syrians ; the alliance of Ahaz with the Assyrians, referred to in ch. vii. may have finally decided the attack of Damascus : yet the prophet was able much earlier to foresee the necessity of the fall of Damascus, and as a fact this discourse shows no trace of the combined march of the Syrians and Ephrámites against Yuda, ch. vii.-



ix. 6. On the contrary, acc. to ver. 3, the remnant of the kingdom of Ephráim had then from fear of the Assyrians already formed an alliance with the Syrians, in the belief that they possessed in the strong fortification of Damascus a secure barrier against new inroads of the Assyrians : and the hostilities mentioned, ix. 10 sq. had found an end. But, in contrast with these expectations, Yesaya foresaw that the impending fall of Damascus would bring after it as a further consequence disaster to the Northern kingdom, in order that, (1) precisely this vain reliance upon Damascus as a strong rampart, (2) pride, (3) idolatry, and (4) false trust in external help generally, these four fundamental faults from which that kingdom, notwithstanding all the heavy losses and calamities of the last years, still continued to suffer, might finally be thoroughly removed. Thus this piece, which should much rather be called an oracle concerning the Northern kingdom than concerning Damascus, falls into four short strophes, the first of which indeed treats of Damascus, but in such a way that even in it the discourse finds a transition to the fate of the Northern kingdom, which is exclusively dealt with in the following strophes. The third is somewhat mutilated at the end.

## 1.

[*High-oracle concerning Damascus.*]

## XVII.

- 1 Behold Damascus will cease as a city | and become a seat of falling ruins; || forsaken are 'Aro'ër's cities, a portion for flocks: | which settle there by no one frightened. || Thus is the defence taken from Ephráim, and the kingdom from Damascus, | and the remnant of Arám will be like the glory of the sons of Israel, | — saith Yahvé of Hosts. ||



## 2.

And then on that day will Yaqob's glory be humbled, | and the fulness of his flesh wasted. ||

5 And when the harvest-time carrieth off the standing-corn, and his arm harvesteth the ears, | then he will be like him that leaseth ears in the valley Rephaïm; || and there surviveth in it a gleaning as at the beating of olives, two three berries above on the top, | four five in the fruit-tree's boughs—saith Yahvé Israel's God. ||

## 3.

On that day the man will look up to his maker, and his eyes will have regard to the Holy One of Israel, || and he will not look to the altars the work of his hands, | and what his fingers have made he will not regard, | together with the idol-groves and the sun-cones. ||

## 4.

10 On that day his fortified cities will be like the desertion of bush and summit which were deserted before the sons of Israel: | and it will become a waste. || Because thou forgottest the God of thy weal, and the rock of thy fortification didst not remember, | therefore thou mayest plant plants of tenderness, and crop it with vines of the foreigner: || on the day when thou plantest them thou cherishest them, and in the morning thou bringest thy seed to blossom— | but the harvest is flown on the day of sickness and incurable pain. ||

1. Vv. 1-3. Both the capital, ver. 1, and the smaller cities of the Syrian kingdom, ver. 2, will be demolished and made desolate stretches of pasture, v. 17; of the smaller cities Yesaya singles out those belonging to the district of 'Aro'er, because they had belonged formerly to Israel and must at this time have been conquered by Damascus.—The result is, ver. 3, that after the conquest of Damascus, Ephraïm loses its advanced protecting wall and Damascus its independence as a kingdom and ceases to be a royal city, whilst the remainder of the Syrian kingdom will be equally pitiable with the wretched glory of the kingdom of Ephraïm, that kingdom which notwithstanding its great losses still, acc. ix. 7 sq., acts so proudly and overbearingly. There lies in the word *glory*, when the circumstances of the time are considered, manifest irony, a bitter sarcasm, which becomes the most serious truth in the following strophe. For

2., vv. 4-6, precisely this glory, this perpetual arrogance of the Northern kingdom, must be humiliated, its superabundant fulness be brought down, ver. 4, comp. x. 16, and with regard to the Northern kingdom similarly, ix. 8 sq. When the great harvest comes, the time of the decision when Yahvé will sit in judgment upon the whole earth, comp. ver. 11, Amos viii. 1; Joel iv. 13, when therefore the harvest-time snatches away by heaps the standing-corn (and the judgment men in crowds) and Yahvé's arm harvests, cuts off, the ears: then the Northern kingdom will see but a very few of its citizens remaining; if it counts its spared members, it is as if some one gleaned ears in the valley Rephaïm south of Jerusalem (a valley, as appears from this passage, whither the poor of Jerusalem were most in the habit of going to glean, and where for that very reason there was usually but the scantiest gleanings left), finding, however, but a few, or the gleanings which is left in this kingdom is even equal only to the wretched gleanings of a few scattered ripe olives, which the gatherer had forgotten to take

away to the press and the poor people knock down with sticks (xxiv. 13).

3. Vv. 7, 8. And when this final judgment has taken place, it is true enough that these men will at last turn from the service of the numerous false gods and idolatrous objects to the true God who alone is able to help and heal; as Yesaya, with certainty, had often shown at greater length, comp. ii. 8 sq.; Mic. v. 13. With regard to the *idol-groves* and sun-cones, see *Alterthümer* p. 301 (260). The reason why the *altars* are specially mentioned, ver. 8, appears from the history of the period of the reign of Ahaz, comp. *History of Israel*, iv. 171 (iii. p. 667).

4. Neither will the fortifications of their own land, in which the kingdom now places such foolish trust, avail them anything. On the contrary, they will then be just as desolated and deserted, comp. vi. 12, as the entire land of Canaan, its thickly populated valleys and its towering heights, was once forsaken of the ancient Canaanites in their flight before the conquering Israelites under Yosúa, ver. 9, which is in this connexion a comparison well adapted to humiliate all national pride. To denominate the valleys and heights, Yesaya correctly and intelligibly makes mention of *bush* (thicket) and summit (tree-top), following the figure of a forest, since the ancient Canaanites divided themselves into inhabitants of mountains and valleys, calling the first *Emorites*, from *Amôr*, *i.e.*, top, tree-top, and the latter *Chittites*, *i.e.*, lowlanders; and the LXX. have caught this meaning with substantial correctness. Comp. *History of Israel*, i. 234; ii. 241 sq. (I. 337 sq.; II. 339 sq.).—And summing up all this with what has gone before, it is said, finally, vv. 10, 11: because Ephráim has forsaken the true help and fortress, he may indeed continue to sow and plant his field with lovely plants from abroad (*i.e.*, with flattering heathen worship and customs); at the beginning in planting he employs a great deal of pains and care upon the growth and cultivation of these splendid poisonous plants, and in the

morning he continues to rejoice in their growth; but the evening comes after the toilsome day, when the reward of the toil should be reaped, and then the harvest has suddenly flown and the joyous morning become a day of incurable sickness. Thus thoughts and images crowd together at the end, and it is clearly evident that here is the conclusion.

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Ver. 1, מִיָּסָר must be understood acc. § 295 *b*: Damascus *will be removed so that it is no longer a city*; comp. the similar construction xxiii. 1.

Ver. 10, נַעֲמָנִים is most correctly interpreted, acc. § 287 *a* note, as *Adonisses*, or *tenderlings*, effeminate gods, from the name of the Syrian god Adonis, who was worshipped also in Phœnicia; in that case *the foreigner* of the next verse-member answers to this name well, and the discourse in the course of this strophe recurs again to the idolatry referred to in the previous one.

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It would be quite conceivable that Yesaya added to this book further the pieces concerning foreign nations xiv. 28——xvi; xxi. 11-17. These oracles would the more suitably follow here, inasmuch as they show that in the immediate future the foreign nations rather than Jerusalem will have to suffer from the Assyrians; which would also accord well with the foregoing pieces. The date of xiv. 28 agrees with vi. 1. Since, however, the following book, to which we subjoin them, appeared but a little later, this difference is unimportant. In any case xvii. 1-11 does not belong originally to the same series as the above.

## III.—YESAYA'S THIRD BOOK.

As the great events of the time followed each other in Yuda since the first days of Hizqia's reign with increasing rapidity and decisiveness, and Yesaya's activity was also thereby greatly widened and intensified, his literary publications succeeded each other from this time at shorter intervals. Hizqia favoured true religion and morality once more in his kingdom (comp. xxxvi. 7 sq., and other proofs). One of the first noble fruits of Yesaya's past labours at the centre of the kingdom was about to come to perfection, and a fresh, strong current of the influence of true religion promoted a more harmonious and free co-operation of both king and prophet. But the first endeavour to take up a more independent position with regard to the demands of the Assyrians, which Hizqia ventured upon was immediately followed by their hostility: and although the Assyrian king was at that time occupied in other ways at a great distance from Palestine, he was nevertheless very well able to encourage the petty nations around Yuda to make inroads upon this kingdom. As Yuda had then been weakened by the misrule of Ahaz, it needed but the destructive incursions of the Philistines (comp. xvi. 28 sq.) and similar nations to throw Jerusalem as it then was into unexpected alarm. But while both within and around it everything grew darker, the inhabitants of the capital, who had become habituated to their full-grown vices, and more recently, under Hisqia's rule, to a hypocritical piety, would hear nothing about that true repentance and amendment which Yesaya had so long demanded. Under these circumstances, he resolved to follow up his other labours by a new literary publication. He now for the first time gave to his two earlier books a connected form, and enlarged this edition by such important additions as the necessities of the later date seemed to require. The way in which the two earlier books were connected may be seen from chap. ii. 1—x. 4, which forms the body of this third en-



larged book; but at the commencement Yesaya placed the piece chap. i., as the most telling introduction to the larger book; and at the close, in connexion with the entirely new view which had just opened up to him into the great heathen world, he added a number of oracles concerning foreign nations, and thus gave a beautiful completeness to this enlarged book.

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## 1. THE GREAT ARRAIGNMENT.

### ch. i.

How long and how often has the prophet, or (as may equally well be said, and in accordance with the profoundest feeling of the prophet) the divine spirit itself, whose living presence within him the prophet so powerfully and constantly feels, endeavoured in every possible way to bring back the nation, which is the community of Yahvé, dwelling here at the ancient sacred centre of the kingdom, to that sincerity and constancy of the divine life, without which it is impossible for it to attain to a better condition! But hitherto his profoundest endeavours, looking at the nation generally, had remained without effect. It was then that the same spirit was moved from the innermost agitation of the entire life of the prophet once more to appeal to the community. Once more, precisely in the sacred city, this spirit, in the most forcible and at the same time most lucid and calm manner, presents itself before the community, with the profoundest effort arraigning and explaining, judging and punishing, to discover whether it will finally succeed in breaking down the obstinacy of the nation and in opening its heart to a fresh and powerful ray of divine light. Never before did such an oration as this burst from the heart and mouth of the prophet; an oration of such pure spirituality, handling every detail from the highest standpoint, with greatest clearness and irresistible force, treating the most difficult matters from this standpoint with greatest

truth and profundity, and irresistibly carrying away every hearer whose heart was not entirely dead to the divine word. Nor does the human side of the speaker anywhere else fall into the background to the same extent as is here the case with Yesaya, and the purest divine voice come forward with all-radiating floods of light and fulness of power.

It is manifestly the profound result, the spiritual residuum, of the experiences and feelings of a long prophetic life to which the fundamental thought of this piece, with its wonderful elevation and energy, owes its origin: just as the previous book, see p. 60 sq., opened with a similar piece, which, although in another manner, could not rise to a loftier elevation. While the piece just mentioned dealt with the earliest years of the prophet's life, this is clearly meant to refer to the time which was then present, although his language on account of its sublimity appears so general. It is, therefore, the more important to inquire particularly what period it was which his words had reference to. From vv. 7-9 it appears that at that time some enemies were devastating the territory of Yuda, and had scarcely spared the capital. These enemies are called *strangers*, ver 7: but this word denotes (acc. xxix. 5, also) simply foreign enemies, and says nothing with regard to their home. We are not allowed to suppose that the invasion of the Assyrians in the time of Sancherib is intended, because when that event occurred Yesaya used quite different language from that we find here, xxxvii. 21 sq.; comp. xxxiii. 1-24. We might then suppose the Assyrians made an invasion at some earlier time, probably shortly after Hizqia's accession to the throne; and although the historical books do not mention it, there is still a number of indications outside this oration which favour this supposition. An Assyrian inroad of this kind is quite plainly presupposed, xxii. 1-14, which, like the inroad of our oration, was not followed up by an actual siege of the capital. Further, the way in which some time later Mikha, v. 4, and Yesaya, x. 28-32, speak of a future invasion

of the Assyrians, points clearly to an unsuccessful invasion which had already taken place, inasmuch as the imagination could borrow pictures of this kind only from such an event. Finally, the position of affairs itself is in favour of the supposition, that after the time of Ahaz a great change must have taken place in the relations of Assyria and Yuda to each other. Under Ahaz, who concluded the alliance with Assyria and without doubt regularly paid his tribute, the Assyrians had no occasion to invade Yuda, and we know of no invasion of this kind during that period. But Hizqia was a man of a totally different character and views from Ahaz; he appears from the very first, as well as later, to have disliked the Assyrian alliance, and to have desired greater independence: and the powerful impulse which was very shortly felt to conclude a counter-alliance with Egypt, chaps. xxviii.-xxxii., is only on this supposition quite intelligible. However, although for these reasons we are compelled to suppose that the Assyrians at no distant date from the accession of Hizqia sent an invading army against Yuda, owing to the different feelings of the new king towards them, and that this army very soon accomplished its object, and also Yuda for the first time saw the Assyrian arms in its neighbourhood, and, in fact, fled before them in a shameful way (as appears from xxii. 3)—it cannot nevertheless be proved from this piece that the enemies mentioned in it were Assyrians. On the contrary, the requirements of this piece are amply met by the supposition that the Philistines and other surrounding nations are here intended, which may also be gathered from the words, xiv. 28-32. But they may have been encouraged by the Assyrians to invade Yuda; a supposition which explains the tone of the oracles concerning them which are found at the end of this third book.

The foreign customs and religions which had been introduced by Ahaz were not favoured under Hizqia, while, on the contrary, the directions of the ancient Yahve-cultus were again more carefully observed by both king and people (vv. 11-14,

comp. xxix. 13 sq.) But Yesaya saw too well through the hypocrisy of those people who, especially because the new king favoured it, put on the appearance of religion, and endeavoured by the most noisy external Yahve-cultus to obtain by violence the divine and the royal favour at one and the same time, and who imagined they had done enough before God, although at the same time they allowed the favourite popular superstition of those days to exist in perfect peace, and probably themselves continued to favour it in secret (vv. 29-31; xxx. 22). Thus this most recent phenomenon in the very centre of the nation is to him only a new proof that the internal perversities, which have been growing for such a long time and at the present moment exist in undiminished numbers, require still greater chastisements from the future, and how little Jerusalem itself can have any advantage before Yahvé on account of its deeds. The justice of the complaint of Yahvé against Israel, the profound meaning of which has completely filled the prophet's mind, while its irrepressible tones will now burst forth from him, appears to him to have therewith reached its most extreme point.

For the tone and life of this oration is exactly as if a great judicial act were about to be introduced and proceeded with: a thought which had long before Yesaya been received into the number of the prophetic thoughts (see Vol. I. p. 147), but is nowhere else worked out with such sublimity and grandeur and such completeness and cogency as here. Yahvé appears as a plaintiff with his witnesses, Israel as the defendant, and the prophet as the daysman. Inasmuch as a proper trial (*processus*) implies (1) the production of the charge with an appeal to the right witnesses, (2) the answer of any objection which might at the opening be made against the production of the charge, (3) that full freedom to defend himself be given to the accused before (4) judgment is passed, this piece accordingly falls of itself into four symmetrical strophes. After the most solemn accusation has been made by Yahvé against his



people, which is burdened with every sin, and therefore punished with increasing severity, so that it can scarcely be further punished, vv. 2-9, the second strophe anticipates the excuse, that the external Yahvé-cultus together with true doctrine sufficed in these things, vv. 10-17; and after the guilt of the nation has been proved even by its own witness, vv. 18-23, the storm of the threat of new punishments can no longer be repressed, which are nevertheless such divine punishments as will lead back the kingdom to its original destination, and open to it the glorious time, vv. 24-31. Thus the whole falls quite properly into these four strophes. Further, comp. *Jahrbb. der Bibl. wiss.* I. p. 40 sq.

i.

1.

- 1 Hear ye heavens and attend O earth ! for Yahvé speaketh : | sons I reared great and exalted, but they have become unfaithful to me. || The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib : | Israel is without knowledge, my people is without understanding ! ||—O sinful people guilt-burdened nation, race of evildoers worthless sons | who have forsaken Yahvé, reviled Israel's Holy One, gone  
5 backward : || whereupon will ye still be smitten, sinning still further ? | the whole head is sickly and the whole heart is ill ; || from the foot-sole and unto the head there is nothing sound in it, wounds and wales and fresh strokes— | not pressed and not bound up, and not soothed with oil ! || Your country is a waste, your cities burnt with fire, | your soil—before your faces barbarians devour it, and it is a waste as if Sodóm were overthrown ! || and the daughter Ssion is left as a booth



in a vineyard, as a hammock in a cucumber field, |  
—as a besieged city. || Had not Yahvé of Hosts  
left us a small remnant, |—like Sodóm we should  
be, Gomorrha we should resemble. ||

## 2.

- 10 Hear Yahve's word ye chiefs of Sodóm, | attend  
to the doctrine of our God ye people of Gomorrha! ||  
What is to me the multitude of your sacrifices ?  
saith Yahvé, | full am I of the gifts of rams and of  
the fat of fed-calves, | and blood of bullocks, lambs  
and he-goats I have no pleasure in ! || In case ye  
come to appear before me : | who requireth *this*  
at your hands, to wear out\* my courts ? || Ye shall  
not any more bring meat-offerings of vanity :  
incense of abomination is that to me ; | new moon  
and Sabbath, festal-peals—I cannot bear hypocrisy  
and solemn festival ; || your new moons and feast-  
days my soul hateth, they are a burden to me, |  
15 am weary of bearing them ! || and when ye spread  
forth your hands I cover mine eyes from you, also  
when ye pray much I do not hear : | your hands  
are full of blood ! || Wash ye make you clean,  
remove the evil of your deeds from before mine  
eyes, | cease to do evil ; || learn to do well, seek  
right, reform the destroyer, | judge the orphan,  
plead the widow's cause ! ||

## 3.

“ Come now and let us argue [the case] ” ! saith  
Yahvé, | “ were your sins as purple, they may  
become white as snow, | were they red as scarlet,

\* Germ. *austreten*.—Tr.

they may become as wool !" || — . . . " If ye are willing and obedient, | the marrow of the land  
 20 shall ye eat ! || but if ye are unwilling and rebellious, | by the sword ye shall be eaten !" yea, Yahvé's mouth hath spoken it. ||—

O how hath become a harlot the faithful city,—

she that was full of right, in which righteousness tarried—

but now murderers !

Thy silver hath become dross, | thy noble drink adulterated with water ; || thy rulers are rebels and thieves' comrades, every one loveth bribery and runneth after pay, | the orphan they judge not, and the widow's cause cometh not before them ! ||

#### 4.

Therefore is the sentence of the Lord Yahvé of Hosts, the Strong One of Israel : | O I will satisfy myself of mine adversaries, and will avenge myself  
 25 of mine enemies, || and will turn back my hand against thee, most purely melting thy dross, | and will remove all thy lead-alloy, || will make thy judges again as aforetime, and thy counsellors as at the beginning : | afterward thou shalt be called "centre\* of righteousness, faithful city" ;\* || Ssion will be redeemed by right, | and her Converts by righteousness. ||—But demolition of evildoers and sinners together ! | and they who have forsaken Yahvé perish. || For ye will grow pale at the Terebinths which ye longed for, | and blush at the

\* Germ. *stätte* and *stadt*.—Tr.

30 gardens which ye preferred ; || yea ye will be as the Terebinth whose leaf withereth, | and as a garden which lacketh water, || and the powerful one will become tow, his work a spark : | thus they both burn together quenched by no one. ||

1. The charge of Yahvé is that of a father who has been faithlessly forsaken by ungrateful sons. As Hosea had previously taught, Yahvé prevented them in ancient times with his paternal love and care, and formed them as peculiarly his own into a great nation. But they who ought to be Yahvé's sons are more unwise and unthankful than cattle that have no understanding, so that it appears as if they had neither memory nor intelligence. That is the distressing accusation which heaven and earth are called upon by Yahvé to hear, because it is the most serious complaint that can be conceived, to which scarcely any other than the highest witnesses can be summoned, those which are ever present as the eternal witnesses of the universal glory and power of God in creation, and in whose presence every nation lives and moves as though these witnesses of creation also heard and saw everything which the nation does or suffers (Mic. vi. 2 ; Deut xxxii. 1 ; Ps. l. 4.) But, after this introduction, the discourse turns more directly to the accused themselves, bringing the proof of the charge, and questions the nation, whose innumerable sins may all run up into that of unfaithfulness to Yahvé, ver. 4, whether they will still go on sinning and then continue to be punished, now that they have been so much punished that there is hardly anything further left ! therefore, at once to speak more briefly and pointedly, whereupon, on what other member of the body, do they intend still to be smitten,—since every spot is already covered with old and new wounds of all kinds ? and whereupon, based upon what still untried transgression do they intend to depart further from Yahvé and go on sinning—inasmuch as there is no further transgression left for them to

commit? This two-fold question is compressed into the one—whereupon will they still be beaten, will they still further sin? ver. 5 sq. The immediate reference to that time is particularly explained, vv. 7, 8: the whole of your cultivated land, in spite of all that the magnates in Jerusalem can do, is laid waste by enemies, who as it were turn the ground upside down, and cause a devastation almost like that of Sodom and Gomorrah in former times, whilst Jerusalem, although hitherto spared, is nevertheless quite isolated and alone in the wide and silent country. Yea, it is said finally, ver. 9, with a fresh outburst of energy in the discourse, we should already have been completely devastated like Sodom, if Yahvé had not graciously spared us a small portion of the whole people. Since Jerusalem was not actually besieged at that time, but as good as besieged, *i.e.* deprived of all connexion with the rest of the country, which was occupied with the enemy's foraging army, Yesaya was able to add, ver. 8, this comparison to a besieged city.

2. It is true, the magnates of Jerusalem imagine that they have discharged their obligations to Yahvé by their numerous temple-sacrifices. But with regard to this, it must immediately be brought before these people, who may be denominated morally people of Sodom, that so far from Yahvé taking delight in the multitude of their magnificent sacrifices and of the profane noise with which they bring them, as if they would wear out with their feet the courts of his temple, thinking that by these offerings they are doing God great service, he is, on the contrary, tired of them, and must ask, who it is then that has given to them the power (hand) and the right to enter with such insolence and noise into his presence, inasmuch as they properly came only for the purpose of seeking his face with prayer and supplication? vv. 11, 12. No, as they at present are, polluted with unrighteousness and sin, it behoves them to bring no sacrifices, since every one that they bring is in truth but a sacrifice of vanity and sin which they manifest in Yahvé's

presence, and wickedness and holiness, falsehood and sanctity can never accord together! Sacrifices and feasts of this kind Yahvé cannot any longer endure in any form, and however much they wring their hands and pray when they present them, he will not hear them, vv. 13-15. Accordingly, all possible kinds of sacrifices and solemn days are mentioned, vv. 13, 14, yet in such a way that the names change beautifully with the structure of the verse-members and the sense; ver. 13 consists of two larger sentences, each of which falls again into a protasis and an apodosis. Since the incense was deemed the portion of the entire sacrifice most acceptable to Heaven, it is said: "Ye shall not bring meat-offerings of sin: abominable incense is that to me;" and since the solemnities are of innumerable kinds, it is further said: "new-moon and sabbath, keeping feasts—as for all that, I hate the contradiction, wickedness and worship."—But that which ye ought to do and do not, the one thing needful, is that ye first wash your blood-stained hands, that ye first learn to do good and give proof of your amendment by your actions, especially that ye root out in the kingdom the violence and oppressions of the magnates, and help those who are bowed down, vv. 16, 17. Comp. Amos v. 21 sq.

3. When whatever could in any way be urged against this grievous charge and its judicial consideration has been thus by anticipation set aside, both sides must of necessity enter respectively upon the trial of the case, and whatever can be said on behalf of the defendant must be brought forward. What will the result be? He, the plaintiff, shrinks from no court and no objection that can be raised, he descends for a moment from his elevation as judge, and desires even that the nation may clear itself from its sins, whether they be real or alleged, may wash itself from that blood, in order that its sins, which seem to be deep red, may become white as wool! ver. 18, comp. xliii. 9. The eternal measure by which the judge measures has indeed been long known, and is here, vv. 19, 20, once more repeated as an introduction to the pending enquiry and deter-



mination of the possible punishment: it is the truth, that a spirit obedient to Yahvé may expect blessing also in the world (in the land), while a spirit of rebellion against him in the end finds everything turned in hostility against it in the world also, a truth which is at the same time both the eternal divine promise and threat, and which will in any case find its application in this trial.—But what is the answer of the nation to this appeal? A long pause occurs, ver. 21, to allow it time to defend itself: but it is silent, and shows by its silence that it is unable to defend itself. Accordingly the prophet himself as the daysman, after the painfully long pause, raises a strain of lamentation over the city which has so utterly fallen from her earlier moral elevation and purity, vv. 21-23. The incorruptible and irrepressible truth from the mouth of the prophet must witness against the defendant, and this strophe has to conclude with the bitter declaration, that the just demand of the divine law, which was made at the end of the previous strophe, has not been in any way fulfilled. Thus painfully do the last words of the previous and the present strophes answer to each other!

4. And the just divine judgment must now break forth in an overwhelming stream; spoken by the *strong* God (x. 13) who has sufficient power to carry it out. Indeed as if the divine punishment and retribution (vengeance) had already delayed too long against those who arouse it by their obstinacy, the stream of threatening breaks forth, v. 24, in sweeping currents as from suppressed fire, coming gradually to explain itself more calmly, ver. 25 sq. By a great judgment the dross and the pieces of lead mixed with the silver, mentioned ver. 22, must be separated as in a purifying fire, what is good and approved must be collected to form a new and pure commencement, as it were a new Davîdic age, vv. 25, 26: only by means of the divine power of righteousness, when it once more assumes its full activity, can the redemption of Ssion and its converts be effected, but by that it will be effected in its time, ver. 27.

Still, on the other hand, all those who obstinately remain in their rebellion meet their ruin, ver. 28 : for the false gods and idolatries at the Terebinths and in the pleasant gardens (lvii. 5 ; Deut. xii. 2 ; 2 Kings xvi. 4), which are at present so ardently preferred to the true God, will so greatly deceive the worshippers who trust in them that the latter will one day themselves present as mournful an aspect as a withered Terebinth and a garden without water, the fools who ought to have known the perishable nature of the things in which they placed their trust, vv. 29, 30 ; or rather, both together, man and his handiwork, *i.e.*, the wooden idols (ii. 8) perish without remedy, the man who is the moment before powerful and proud becoming suddenly slack tow, and his idol, the creation of his sin, becoming the spark to enkindle it, just as men are always destroyed by the products of their sin and their idols, xxx. 13.

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On i. 5, 6. Since the complete picture of the corporate state appears in this way in the explanatory answer, the *suff. masc. sing.* is used בּוֹ with an implied reference to this. Ezek. xxix. 7 shows that כָּל ראשׁ may certainly be used in poetic language in the sense of *the whole head*. The word לְחָלִי means inclined to sickness, that is, sickly ; רָצָה refers back to מָכָה טְרִיהַ simply.

It is essential to bear in mind with regard to i. 7, that מַה־זָּכַר, in accordance with its constant usage (comp. *History of Israel*, I. 314, (I. p. 450) ), necessarily dates back to Sodom, which may be alluded to even in this passage, acc. vv. 9, 10. If the following word זָרִים were the true reading, the sentence would have to be understood thus : “as if foreigners (barbarians) overturned *it* (the ground), devastated it after the manner of Sodom” ; for מַה־זָּכַר is in any case, like Amos iv. 11, an *inf. acc.* § 239 *a*. The emphasis would then not fall upon the idea of the *foreigners*, but upon that of the *overturning of the ground* alone : yet acc. to *a* it is the thought of the

foreigners which is meant to be made prominent. On this account, therefore, as well as on account of the **הפך**, it is probably best to read **קדם** instead of **זרים**, since the latter reading could easily arise in this place by taking the **ך** for a **ר**.

On i. 8. That **נצר** may mean *to keep an eye upon a city, i.e., to invest and begin to besiege it*, is clear from Jer. iv. 16; Ezek. vi. 11: and when it is remembered that Jerusalem was not actually besieged at that time, although the country was devastated, the meaning of the words in this passage is not doubtful. It is true that **ציר** denotes originally a *citadel* (acc. *History of Israel*, IV. 100, (III. p. 572 note) ), but this signification would not supply a better meaning here, and the LXX. already give the translation *πολιορκουμένη*. A besieged city is as solitary in the midst of a country as a booth for the vine-dresser in an extensive garden: but the worst part of it is that Jerusalem at present lies in a great waste and a silenced country, as if it were besieged, while at the same time this is not the case.

The severity of the meaning of i. 12 only appears when **כי** is taken with the following *imperf. acc.* §. 362 *b*: *although ye come to appear before me (comp. §. 279 c)*, I do not object to it while I do not demand it: but *who demandeth this of you and hath given you authority*, that ye deluge and trample off my courts as profane places with the noise of such offerings? This idea of trampling off, wearing out with the feet, the temple courts is later often adopted from this passage, *e.g.*, Rev. xi. 2.

As to **המוץ**, ver. 17, comp. §. 152 *b*: the meaning is further made clear by the fact that **אשר** can only denote putting a wanderer or sinner upon the right way again.

It appears from the context itself that the sentence vv. 19, 20, is meant as a quotation from some ancient and well-known sacred book of law: but the language is also peculiar, as the phrase **האכלי חרב תאכלי** acc. §. 279 *c*, its paronomasia with **האכלי**,

and the words *surely Yahvé's mouth hath spoken it*, which occurs only in Yôél, comp. Mic. iv. 4, (and repeated in an artistic way "Is." xl. 5; lviii. 14), whilst elsewhere Yesaya uses the formula "נאם", explained Vol. I. p. 9, and very rarely (xxii. 25; comp. Obad. ver. 18; Joel iv. 8; "Is." xxv. 8) the shorter phrase *surely Yahvé hath spoken it* as a concluding sentence. It may also be correctly maintained that the transition from ver. 17 to vv. 18, 19 is too rapid, and a verse has been lost which pointed in express words to this ancient utterance as that which was to form the basis of the pending judgment. Only on this supposition does this strophe receive its full number of verses.

On the other hand, Yesaya evidently intentionally chooses, ver. 21, a more poetic form of language on account of the lyric, as appears especially in the form מְלִאֲתִי §. 211 *b* ;\* comp. the similar case v. 1. But the language resumes the ordinary prophetic form with ver. 23.—*Rulers are rebels* ver. 23, as an attempt to represent the play on the words: more closely, *thy princes are stubborn, vicious*: but Yesaya in this case follows Hosea's lead ix. 15.—The word פֶּבֶר may originally have meant *as with soap*, but in this connexion can only denote generally *most purely*, and in respect of construction is very different from פְּבוֹר, Job ix. 30.

The construction נִבְּלָתָ עֲלֶיהָ, ver. 30, may be taken as *stat. constr.*, according to the similar combinations xxx. 27, comp. §. 288 *c*; although it is true that the simpler עָלֶיהָ is all that is required, and the above punctuation may point to the reading עֲלֵיהָ which is found in several MSS., according to which עליה is the subject of a relative sentence, and נבלת is its predicate, *whose leaves wither*.

The stormy, agitated language of ver. 24 is explained by the ancient procedure of court of justice, in conformity with which at the close the condemned man, *e.g.*, for murder, was

\* Elsewhere in Isa. the only instance is רִזְקִי xxii. 16, but the position is not quite the same.



delivered to his accuser and prosecutor to execute the punishment in whatever way he might think well: at length therefore he could have his revenge! It is as if we still heard in this passage the words which would be used in such cases in those times.

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## 2. (THE TWO FOREGOING BOOKS),

without doubt as they were before their present transpositions and hiatuses.

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## 3. THE ORACLES CONCERNING FOREIGN NATIONS.

Since the nearest neighbours of Yuda, as was above remarked, immediately after the death of Ahaz harassed this kingdom with greater violence on account of its apparent distress, it was opportune that Yesaya should declare to them how much more than Yuda they themselves had cause to fear the Assyrians. Besides, the time was rapidly approaching when the Assyrians attained the summit of their power, and threatened to subjugate all the nations around Yuda, even as far as Africa. It was then Yesaya turned his attention more closely to all the surrounding petty nations, and in the light of the religion of Yahvé considered their condition, and their hopes, their past history and the future which now threatened them. There was at that time a good degree of intercourse between all these nations, and it was probably no rare occurrence that an embassy from one of these threatened countries should come to Jerusalem to get information or to seek aid. In such cases, the exertions of a great prophet would not infrequently be aroused, whether he was expressly applied to for advice, or whether he felt merely an inward call to make himself heard. Comp. the references xiv. 32; xxi. 11; xviii. 2, also xvi. 1-6 and Jer. xxvii. 3, which require the above suppositions to make them intelligible. Of this kind of oracle there have been preserved four examples, for the most part



short, in all of which the Assyrians are represented as the instrument of just punishments, by which Yahvé will make himself felt amongst the heathen also, that they may be led to consider their great moral defects. We may consider that precisely these four were in any case published with this third book: it is possible that it contained others. The first of them, however, is distinguished in many respects from the other three.

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### 1. Concerning the Philistines.

xiv. 28—32.

As appears also from its heading, ver. 28, this oracle was on some occasion spoken by Yesaya before the death of Ahaz, but was now for the first time received into this book. The Philistines, from the time of David only partially subdued, had used the weak government and other difficulties of king Ahaz to free themselves completely from the rule of Yuda; indeed, they had made conquests in the territory of this kingdom itself, 2 Chron. xxviii. 18; comp. Isa. ix. 11. But just at that time Yesaya had proclaimed to the Philistines who had become insolent on account of their successes against Yuda, that they should not exult too confidently, since soon a much harder master than even Yuda had been would come upon them bringing total devastation. It is true that Yuda is also greatly depressed and troubled; but there is in it an inexhaustible spring of eternal hope and future weal (as Yesaya had explained definitely and in detail in his earlier orations, especially in the last book, so that here a brief reference to the subject was quite sufficient), and Ssion supplies, precisely in the greatest danger, a higher refuge such as no heathen sanctuary can offer. In its distress, therefore, Philistia will learn to its terror how little cause it has to rejoice at the fact that it has withdrawn itself from the rule and accordingly from the protection of the God of Israel and his

sanctuary !—This wealth of ideas is expounded with greatest brevity and precision in two short strophes of two verses each.

#### XIV.

28 In the death-year of king Ahaz came this high-oracle :

##### 1.

Rejoice not all Philistia, that the staff is broken which smote thee : | for from the root of the serpent will sprout a Cerastus, and its fruit is a flying dragon ! || And the poor feed upon my pasture, and the helpless couch quietly : | but I kill with hunger thy root, and thy remnant will he murder. ||

##### 2.

Wail thou gate, cry thou city, be dismayed all Philistia ! | for from the North cometh smoke, and none separateth himself in his ranks. || And what will one answer the messengers of the people ? | —that Yahvé hath founded Ssion, and upon it the sufferers of my people trust. ||

1. Rejoice not, thou whole land of Philistia with all thy smaller provinces, that thy former superior government, the Yudaean, has been abolished : for allowing that this had been a serpent, or a poisonous tree, yet from the roots, hidden under the earth and ineradicable (vi. 13 ; xi. 1) of the serpent, a much more dangerous one, a Cerastus (xi. 8) would sprout, and its ripe fruit would be even a dreadful flying dragon (xxx. 6 ; Herod. ii. 75) ! without figure : from the abolition of the comparatively mild suzerainty of Yuda will arise the much more

oppressive one of the Assyrians, nay, in the end, from their rule the complete devastation of the land. They who are now the most unfortunate and helpless, the Yudæans, will then lie down as in a quiet pasture, led by Yahvé, the best shepherd: whilst Yahvé, by the results of this war, slays thee from the very foundation, leaving neither root nor remnant (v. 24).

2. Rather instead of exultation at Yuda's misfortune, wail and despair, gate and city (iii. 26), all Philistia: for from the North (from Assyria) there already comes, as the prophet sees in his spirit, that smoke which announces the approach of great armies (Cant. iii. 6; Rev. ix. 2); and indeed an army approaches in whose ranks the most marvellous order and discipline prevails, in which no one isolates or separates himself, but all remain in closed ranks, v. 27. If in this extremity ambassadors of the Philistines hasten to the place of their former protecting government, they will not find in Jerusalem equally helpless perplexity and the same destruction, but, on the contrary, a calm trust in Yahvé and his sanctuary, courage and power to hold out, acc. viii. 13, 14; xxviii. 16.

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The reading פְּכוּרִי, xiv. 30, would mean *the first-born of the bowed-down, i.e., those bowed-down beyond all others*. A similar reading is found at least, Job xviii. 13: but in this passage the corresponding member, as well as ver. 32, has the simple word *the helpless*, and the simple meaning is in each case all that is required. It is better, therefore, to point the word פְּכוּרִי, from פֹּר, another form of פָּר, which Yesaya used elsewhere as appears from xxx. 23: and, in fact, the full meaning is only then brought out.

The form נָמוּג, ver. 31, must be considered the *inf. abs. acc.* § 240c, 328c; and at all events the change from the *imper.* serves to bring greater variety of expression into the two members.

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It is in every way suitable to this connexion that Yesaya

should pass from the Philistines in the south-west to Môab in the south-east,\* chaps. xv.-xvi. The circle of foreign nations concerning which he was intending to speak began thus to be described. In the same way Yéremyá passes from the Philistines to Môab, chaps. xlvii., xlviii., while Hézeqiél, ch. xxvi., observes a different order only because for special reasons he begins with 'Ammôn. But it is equally clear that Yesaya immediately passed from Môab (if some other oracles of the same kind were not inserted after this concerning Môab) to the two brief oracles concerning Arabian peoples, xxi. 11-17, since they as being farther eastward naturally came after Môab. These three oracles as they were delivered by Yesaya have further the greatest similarity to each other. Yesaya used in all alike oracles of older prophets, and of one older one in particular, as we shall soon see. He spoke concerning these three nations not in public as before concerning the Philistines; but he interwove these three oracles in a written form only into this book. On the other hand, the pieces which are now placed between xvii. 1—xxi. 10, cannot, according to all these indications, have had this portion originally. The simple heading, xv. 1, might be from Yesaya's hand when compared with xiv. 28; but the two others, xxi. 11, 13, are clearly from a later hand, which renders it doubtful whether the first of the three is not also from the same source.—The first of these oracles is of very special importance; its greater length would of itself give it this.

## 2. Concerning Môab, ch. xv., xvi.

The people of Môab, nearly related to Israel but remaining in heathenism and after the Davidic conquest often involved during those centuries in sanguinary struggles with Israel, was at that time free, and could not be easily subjugated again by Israel. Yet inasmuch as it had only cast off the Israelitish yoke to fall back again completely into a more unrestrained heathen life, Yesaya had therefore in the case of this related



nation still greater occasion than in the case of the Philistines to anticipate that the threatening Assyrian conquest would bring righteous punishment, and that the proud nation would in vain wish that it had not revolted from Yuda. However, the manner in which Yesaya handles this subject is quite new. He purposely repeated the prophecy of an older prophet, and merely adds a few words of his own, xvi. 13, 14. Closer examination, however, shows that the ancient oracle in the form in which it had been preserved almost entire in ch. xv., xvi. 7-12, had itself been enlarged by an older prophet by the addition xvi. 1-6, when Yesaya received it into his book. We must, therefore, distinguish between these three prophets.

1. At the time of the oldest of these prophets, a devastating invasion, as his words clearly show, had suddenly been made upon Môab; its capital had been stormed and the entire land thrown into a state of extreme confusion and terror. This was probably an inroad and nocturnal sally of Arabian tribes, Môab's northern neighbours, who had made an alliance for this purpose xvi. 8; at all events the evidence for a more definite supposition is wanting.\* That the victorious invasion came from the north-east, appears from the flight in a north-west direction, xv. 5-7. Already general lamentation was heard through the land, many hastened to the sacred places, which lay generally upon the high mountain summits of the land, to call upon the national gods in great despair, xv. 2; comp. xvi. 12, whilst many more escaped with their possessions into the south. Yet deeply as the prophet was affected at such great distress, and although he gave free vent to his human sympathy, he could not in the higher divine sense see any true salvation for a nation which had all along been turning to its false gods and

\* To suppose that the advance of the three kings of Israel, Yuda, and Edóm, against Môab, 2 Kings ch. iii., is intended, is forbidden by the great difference in the locality (comp. *History of Israel*, IV. 88. (III. p. 555 sq.)). With regard to the date, there is nothing in the way of the supposition: but every other appearance is against it.



even now in deepest distress sought protection from them alone. This sudden calamity, which was also likely soon to pass over, seemed to him, therefore, but a prelude to future and greater chastisements of Môab, which he conceived as necessary to bring back this nation, which had sunk so deeply into heathenism, to the knowledge of the True One, xv. 9; xvi. 11, 12. The prophecy fell, accordingly, as far as we can now see, into the exceedingly simple parts of only two long strophes, sorrow and sympathy with Môab occupying almost the entire first strophe, ch. xv., the prophetic anticipation of greater sufferings in store for the nation only just appearing at the end; on that account this anticipation then recurs in the second, xvi. 7-12, with the greater force, and concludes with the prospect, that only when Môab has fully recognised the helplessness of its gods will it finally turn to the truth and at the same time to deliverance.

It is difficult to determine who this older of the three prophets was. The peculiarities of feeling, art, and language lead to the supposition that he was a very ancient prophet, from whom nothing further has been preserved. Among the more ancient prophets there is no one else whose feelings are like those we find here; the prophet is carried away by his grief and pity; his tone is rather that of melting tenderness, of elegiac lamentation, than prophetic sternness. There is much in the style and tone of the discourses of this prophet which strongly reminds us of Hosea, although the difference between them is too great to permit us to suppose that they are the same. In point of language, the constantly recurring *פִּי* and *כֹּן*, the unusual word *הִיָּדָר* xvi. 9, 10, which Yéremyá adopts from this oracle and again uses more frequently, the equally uncommon forms *יַעֲרֵר* xv., 5, §. 121 *ב*, *אַרְיֵהָ* xvi. 9, §. 253 *a*, and several other peculiarities are such as do not occur elsewhere. The number of paronomasiæ is also remarkable in a prophet of such evident antiquity; and just as the prophetic thought retains here its early simplicity, so the art observed in

the structure of the strophes is also of the most ancient type. Each of the two strophes falls into three smaller ones, and the first retains completely the form of a primitive elegy. Now, recent inquiries have shown that it was precisely the poets and prophets of the Ten Tribes who cultivated very early an extremely artistic, tender style, adorned with numerous paronomasiæ. Inasmuch, then, as our prophet evidently had full personal knowledge of the districts of Môab, which he here describes with great accuracy, and also watched everything with such great interest, it may be concluded that like Hosea he was an ancient prophet on the other side of the Yordan, and like Hosea a citizen of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, for the further reason that Môab belonged originally to this kingdom. And since the only passage in which the authors of the nocturnal attack are distinctly mentioned, xvi. 8, points to allied heathen tribes, probably therefore Arabian neighbours, but Yarob'am II. conquered the land of Môab, acc. 2 Kings xiv. 25, comp. 'Amôs vi. 14 and here likewise xv. 7, it follows that our prophet is older than 'Amôs. On the other hand, this prophet must have written some time after Môab had revolted again from the kingdom of the Ten Tribes (see *History of Israel*, IV. 77, 88, (iii. 541, 555, *sq.*)), *i.e.*, after 897 B.C. Thus everything leads to the conclusion that he lived about the time of Yôél, or, at all events, not much later. That a prophet of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes should at that time follow with very peculiar interest the fortunes of the people of Môab, which had not so very long before revolted, is quite natural.

2. But the words xvi. 1-6, which, as we now find them, have been inserted as a middle strophe between the above-named two, are plainly enough of an entirely different character and complexion. The difference of language and of the tone of the discourse is so great that we might be led to think that Yesaya himself is the writer rather than the previous prophet. Indeed, we might have been inclined to suppose, from the considerable similarity of the words xvi. 4 *d* with xxix. 20, that

Yesaya is the only writer possible, had he not himself too plainly said at the end, xvi. 13, 14, that he here repeated the entire piece concerning Môab as he had received it. Neither does the likeness between the language of the prophet and of Yesaya extend far enough; and that solitary case of similarity between xvi. 4 and xxix. 20 is explained by supposing that this piece was in Yesaya's mind. The same result is yielded by the historical circumstances which are discernible in this interpolation. For the righteous and prosperous King of Yuda, with whom Môab at that time wished to be connected, acc. xvi. 4, 5, was manifestly 'Uzzia in his better days, some time, therefore, before Yesaya's public appearance. At that time Môab must have been threatened afresh by an alarming enemy: but because the kingdom of the Ten Tribes had already become very weak, it sought aid and protection from Yuda, which our prophet advised Yuda not to grant, because Môab appeared to him to be still far too unprepared to return to the true religion. But this aid must have been lent by 'Uzzia subsequently, sometime after 770 B.C., when without doubt it was sought with greater modesty, and moreover the house of Yehû in the northern kingdom had already fallen, as the course of events shows (comp. *History of Israel*, IV. 145, (iii. 631)). Inasmuch as our prophet, therefore, advised that protection should not be given, he properly inserted his addition between the two strophes, as if the prophetic lamentation of the second strophe were the result of the refusal of protection which had then been made for a time. The mention of the important city Séla', xvi. 1, as belonging to the territory of Yuda, also points to the same period, since this city was again wrested from the Idumæans by King Amassya, 2 Kings xiv. 7. At all events, it is most natural to judge from the context that this Séla' belonged at that time to Yuda, since a still further indication points to such an early date. For it appears from xvi. 4 that the disturbances under Amassya had then been only just recently quelled in Yuda, and 'Uzzia had accordingly not been

long raised to the throne, although he had already fully approved himself as fitted to reign (comp. *History of Israel* IV. 142, (iii. 627 sq.) ). We may, therefore, justly suppose that this prophet laboured almost fifty years before Yesaya appeared publicly in Jerusalem; and yet he certainly did not publish his revised form of the older oracle quite in this detached shape.

3. This being the subject-matter of the older prophecy, it is quite evident that Yesaya could easily apply it with a brief supplement to his own time. The new and still more powerful enemy and the final calamity which the older prophet had anticipated as coming upon Môab, had not yet arrived, but now, with the threatening position of the Assyrians, whose further historical relations to Moab we unhappily cannot trace, the fulfilment of the ancient prophecy seemed near and not to be longer postponed. This is the one thought which Yesaya adds in his own words, xvi. 13, 14.—This piece is subsequently used in a free way by Yéremyá, ch. xlviii.

*The High-Oracle concerning Môab.*

1.

XV.

- 1      *Yea in the night when 'Ar-Môab was stormed, it is destroyed, | yea in the night Qir-Môab was stormed, it is destroyed. || Habbáith and Dibon ascendeth the Heights to weep, | upon Nebó and upon Mædabá Môab waieth, upon all its heads baldness, every beard shorn; || in its streets it hath girt on sack-cloth, | upon its roofs and its markets waieth it wholly, running down in weeping; || and Heshbon and El'ale lamenteth, unto Yáhass their voice is heard; | therefore Môab's strong-ones shout alarm —his soul shaketh in him!\** ||

\* The Hebrew לִי is rendered by the simple Germ. dative *ihm*. In English the substitution of another prep. is necessary.—Tr.



5 *My heart lamenteth over Môab, whose fugitives unto Ssóar 'Eglath-Shelishiya, | because of Luchith's ascent—with weeping it ascendeth it, because they raise on the way to Horonáim a cry of death. || For Nimrim's waters\* will become deserts, | for grass drieth up, green vanisheth, herbage is at an end. || Therefore the savings they have gotten | and their stores—beyond the brook of the Steppes they carry it. ||*

*Yea the lamentation hath spread round Môab's border, | unto Egláim is their wailing, unto Beér-Elím their wailing! || Yea Dimóns waters† are full of blood : | for I bring upon Dimón yet new things, upon Môab's war-fugitives a lion, and upon the survivors of the land. ||*

## 2.

## XVI.

1 “Send ye the lambs of the prince of the land Séla‘ towards the desert | away to the mount of the daughter Ssion !” || And as wandering birds, a nest driven out, | are Môab's daughters, the fords of Arnon : || “bring ye counsel, carry out arbitration, | make [O Ssion !] as the night thy shadow at high noon-day, | shelter the scattered, the fugitive betray not ! || let Môab's scattered ones tarry with thee, be to them a shelter from the spoiler ! | for the oppression hath ceased, the spoil-

\* As if one of our brooks was called *the Fair-waters*.

† As if the brook were called *the Bloody*, or *the Blood*.



ing is at an end, the tormenters have vanished from the  
 5 land, || and with graciousness has the throne been  
 established, and there sitteth thereupon by faithfulness in  
 David's tent | a judge both seeking right and expert in  
 justice." ||—"We have heard the haughtiness of Môab  
 the very haughty, | his pride and his haughtiness and  
 his insolence, the insincerity of his pratings !" ||

## 3.

*Therefore let Môab wail for Môab, wholly let it  
 wail, | for Qir-Haréséth's grapes moan ye, solely  
 smitten down! || for Heshbon's fields droop, Sibmah's  
 vine—the Heathen-lords have beaten down its noble  
 branches which reached unto Ya'zer, strayed through  
 the desert, | its shoots which trailed, which went over  
 the sea. ||*

*Therefore let me with Ya'zer's weeping bewEEP  
 Sibmah's vine, let me water thee with my tears,  
 Heshbon and El'ale! | for upon thy fruit- and thy  
 10 corn-harvest fell the wild uproar, || and joy and  
 exultation is withdrawn from the fruit-fields, and in  
 the vineyards there is no jubilation nor shouting, |  
 wine in presses treadeth no treader, the wild uproar  
 I still! ||*

*Therefore my feelings sound over Môab like the  
 harp, | and my inward parts over Qir-Háres. ||  
 Yet when appeareth when awearieth himself—Môab  
 upon the Height, | and cometh into his sanctuary to  
 pray and is not able: || [then he will wholly give up Kamôsh  
 and learn humbly to apply to Yahvé. !]*

This is the word which Yahvé spake to Môab long ago ; || but now Yahvé speaketh thus : Within three years as a hireling's years | then will Môab's glory be humbled with all the great turmoil, | and the remnant will be very small, not great. ||

1. Of the three smaller strophes, which are very distinctly marked off by pauses, the *first*, vv. 1-4, considers the general confusion and lamentation of the remainder of the land which followed the terrible and sudden destruction of its two chief cities. This strophe, therefore, deals with the immediate and present condition of the time. The second and third strophes then pass to further results, such as are already apparent, namely, flight even beyond the border, and such as will in the future come increasingly to light, namely, the fresh terrible calamities which are threatening, the scorching up of the land, as if it were smitten with the divine curse, vv. 5-7, and another sanguinary destruction even of the few who had been saved, vv. 8, 9. These three short strophes, just as in an elegy, with a successive diminution of the volume of the discourse, comp. *Dichter des A. B. I. a*, p. 148 sq.—(1) Ar-Môab, ver. 1, is the capital, strictly speaking, Qîr-Môab, properly Môab's *wall* or *fortress*, appears to have been, as the strongest fortress, the second capital, *Xápaka*, 2 Macc. xii. 17. The hostile army had, therefore, divided itself, according to a customary military stratagem, into two armies, for the purpose of surprising both capitals at the same time, in which they were successful. The lamentations which followed appeared in every form, both by all signs of mourning and weeping before the altars upon the mountains Nebô and Mædebá, and by loud wailing ; it appeared everywhere, in all cities from Habbáith (probably the same place which is further defined by *Bæth-Diblaháim*, Jer. xlviii. 22), and Dibon, from Heshbon and El'ale, unto the north-

western border, near Yáhass [comp. *History of Israel*, II. 209 (II. p. 295)]; both upon the roofs of the houses and in the markets of all towns; it appears finally even amongst the warriors, the warriors of Môab, who are at all other times so stout, cry *murder* because in its inmost parts the soul of Môab *melteeth*,\* because the entire nation is convulsed with terror to its very bone and marrow, a play upon both the words and the thought (see vol. I. p. 69 *sq.*).—(2) Yea, the prophet himself is compelled to join in the lamentation when he sees how the fugitives hasten even unto Ssóar, unto Eglath Shelishiya (which is correctly used as the name of a place, Jer. xlviii. 34 also) on the south-western border, how in this direction *with weeping* they *ascend* the difficult *ascent* (elevation) of Luchith, on the opposite slope (Jer. xlviii. 5) of Horonáim lift up a cry of alarm and murder, ver. 5. Indeed, it seems as if nature herself were about from this time to assume an aspect of grief, the well-watered and verdant land of Môab becoming a barren desert! ver. 6, comp. xix. 5; xxxiii. 9; Hab. iii. 17; in the dread this causes both of the further wrath of their gods and of their enemies, the people of Môab seem now to be carrying off their entire moveable property over the Steppe-brook on the southern border, ver. 7, comp. Amos. vi. 14.—(3) Yea, as a fact, the loud lamentation has encircled the entire boundary of the land, unto Egláim and Beér Elim, *i.e.*, as far as into the southern boundary of Yuda, Ez. xlvii. 10 (however, these names rather than any other are chosen only for the sake of the paronomasia with the Hebrew word *wailing*), ver. 8: for it is certain (and here for the first time the divine *I* appears), that the fortunes of this land are threatened with new and severe devastations, the river *Dimon* (as if it were named *the blood*) is full of blood, and will carry still more blood; Yahvé will bring a lion, a still more powerful and

\* The author renders the paronomasia: "Môabs Starke rufen *zeter*—seine seele zittert ihm." Cheyne (The Book of Isaiah Chronologically arranged by F. K. Cheyne, M.A., Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. London, 1870) represents it by: "The valiant ones of Moab *shriek*, his soul *shrinketh* within him."—*Tr.*

overwhelming enemy, upon the warriors and others who have escaped the present peril ! ver. 9, comp. 2 Kings iii. 22.

2. It is true, they will in the midst of such distress seek protection from their ancient protector and suzerain, the Davîdic king in Ssion. They are advised to send to Ssion the lambs (*i.e.*, the customary annual present, the tribute, 2 Kings iii. 4) of the prince of the land, which are his just due, from Sêla', or with the Greek name, *Petra*, on the south of that border-river, xv. 7, in which large mercantile city they may be able to assemble and conveniently buy the tribute, ver. 1. And immediately, in trembling fright, like unprotected birds, the *daughters i.e.*, the individual communities of Môab, the fords, *i.e.*, the dwellers near the fords of the Arnon, the chief river of Môab, do actually hasten to Jerusalem with urgent petitions for counsel, for the putting into force of the inherent right of arbitrament (or intervention, by which a more powerful neighbour and former suzerain acts as umpire between two contending parties for the purpose of assisting the one that is without just cause oppressed), for protection in this hot day, and reception of the fugitives. vv. 2-4 *a*. But unhappily, the reason which they add for the hearing of their prayer, and the arrogant tone of their language, cannot but of itself betray the still-unreformed feeling and temper of the nation (so little is that which is invariably wrong able to conceal itself, even in the time of need) : they are of opinion that the former severe rule (which had led them to revolt, as their language insinuates) has now disappeared in Yuda, the throne, they say, is now established by grace and faithfulness, the two fundamental virtues of a good ruler, and a judge, as zealous as he is experienced in justice, sits upon Davîd's throne and in his house. But how does it become those who are seeking help to desire to palliate their former, in nowise excusable, faithlessness, by a pretext which is not even well founded ? Is *that* simple subjection to the former state of obedience ? Therefore, ver. 6, the answer is returned from the exalted



throne: we have heard their words, the haughty, insincere, ostentatious words, heard them, and that is enough! If Môab continues to show so little penitence, it cannot be assisted: and therefore, the prophet also, however greatly it grieves him, must

3. leave Môab to itself and its further chastisements, to see whether in the future it may perhaps recognize the helplessness of its gods and turn humbly to Yahvé. At present it cannot be assisted, and the prophet can only mourn over its destruction, which has commenced with such heavy blows; three times must the prophet lift up his lamentation afresh, although it has already become calmer, before it can be quite brought to end in peace. For it is a fruitful land, rich in vines and fruits of all kinds, a luxuriant nation, spreading itself far abroad; it is as if a luxuriant vine, sending out its trailing branches in all directions, were smitten with all its fruit by a rough hand, and had now to wither away: and can one who is a prophet see that with pleasure? This is the principal picture of the first two strophes, comp. Hos. x. 1; Isa. v. 1-6; Ps. lxxx. 9 *sq.*—(1) Therefore let Môab mourn over Môab, over itself! no one can render it any help; over the grape-cakes (Cant. ii. 5; Hos. iii. 1), which can no longer be devoured, over the drooping fields (xv. 6), over the smitten vine, whose noble branches (Isa. v. 2) and luxuriant trailing shoots spread out far beyond the borders of the land towards the north or to Ya'zér (comp. *History of Israel*, II. 201, (II. 289)), and towards the desert and towards the east, or the Dead Sea, as if they would overgrow everything,—for these things let there be lamentation everywhere in the land, in Qîr-Haréséth, Heshbon, Sibma, places which have specially seen this luxuriance of the ground! vv. 7, 8. Yea,—(2) the prophet also must join in the lamentation of the places which have been deprived of their ornament: for a wild uproar, that of the enemy, fell with sudden destruction into the rich harvest and its wild uproar, and in the future the loud joy of the harvest will not again be heard in



these fruit-fields, because a Higher One (here the second and final *I* breaks in) will by that warlike uproar bring this peaceful one to silence (another paronomasia) vv. 9, 10.—(3) On that account, therefore, the prophet cannot remain quiet, his feelings are stirred, loudly sounding like a harp, ver. 11. Yet one hope remains—the eternal hope: when Môab, in the pressure of the further calamities of the future, again *appeareth* as now, (xv. 2,) in its idol-temple (the sacred term for going to the temple, i. 12) or rather *wearieth himself*, vainly wrings his hands (again a paronomasia) and in complete despair is unable even to pray—then he will be ashamed of his god Kamôsh and learn true humility in Yahvé! But the last words, which are necessary to complete the sense, have been lost.

In vv. 13, 14, every syllable has Yesaya's majestic tone. *As the daylabourer's days*, i.e., strictly measured, not longer, xxi. 16.

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With regard to the geography of the land of Môab, which the oldest of the three prophets so graphically glances at, much fresh knowledge has been acquired during the last twenty or thirty years. We are especially indebted to the works of de Saulcy (*Voyage en terre sainte*, Paris, 1865) and H. B. Tristram (*The Land of Israel*, London, 1865) for this fuller knowledge. Comp. with regard to both of these works, *Gött. Gel. Anz.*, 1866, p. 429 sq., 1565 sq. However, there is a good deal of the geography of these chapters about which we have but little definite knowledge, while, again, there are some points of it which have not been even examined. That *Qîr-Môab*, xv. 1, is the same as *Qîr-Hâres*, or *Qîr-Haréséth*, named at the commencement and also at the close of the third of the main strophes, xvi. 7, 11, and that the latter is only the primary name of the strong fortress, while the former is chosen merely for the sake of greater euphony, xvi. 11, was indicated in the *History of Israel*, IV. 89 (III. p. 557). We have thus an explanation of the fact that Jer. xlviii. the latter name only is

found, vv. 31, 36. As to 'Ar-Môab, see Vol. I. p. 165. The locality of Nebó, xv. 2, according to the above most recent geographical books appears to have been at last certainly discovered. The name *Dibón*, xv. 2, alters its sound a little, ver. 9, to *Dimón* to suit the paronomasia.

xv. 1. According to this understanding of the passage, it is merely the difference between being *subdued* (stormed) and *annihilated*, which is prominently brought forward: that the two chief cities appeared already destroyed by the terrible attack would be at that time the worst that could happen. It is true that the entire ver. 1 might be supposed to form only the protasis to vv. 2-4: in that case *laid waste . . . . destroyed* would convey the feeling of great distress. But it seems difficult to conceive that all the events of vv. 2-4 are intended to have taken place in that one night. And yet it is probably correct, if the entire land had for some days been prepared beforehand for this night.

xv. 9. The word פליטה is certainly distinguished from שאריר as denoting the warriors which have escaped from the battle, whilst the latter word denotes all the rest. What still more powerful enemy the oldest prophet intended by the *lion* it is hard to say: his successor might intend by it the King of Yuda, inasmuch as the lion was the emblem on the flags of Yuda (see *History of Israel*, III. 250 (III. 341) ), and on that account be the more naturally induced to insert the following strophe in this place.

xvi. 4. The Massôra intend *a* and *b* to be understood thus: "let my scattered ones sojourn with thee, let Môab—be a shelter to them!" But it is much easier to read יְיָ יְיָ; comp. thereon *Gött. Gel. Anz.* 1832, p. 103.—Ver. 5, the elegant use of the conjunction וְ, acc. § 359, should be observed: Yesaya himself does not affect it, but this instance shows how accurately he quoted the words of his predecessor.

xvi. 9. The ornate expression, "let me with Ya'zer's weeping bewEEP the vine of Sibma!" may be most naturally explained

by the transition from the previous strophe, ver. 8; but the apparent frigidity of it disappears when it is remembered that *Ya'zer* may signify the *helper*, as if the prophet desired to make himself a helper by joining in the grief.—The similarity between the words ver. 10 and Joel i. 16 is not decisive enough to warrant any inference therefrom. Both prophets belong to nearly the same time.

With regard to the unusual words, xvi. 12, it is, on the one hand, certain that they cannot be far from the end, because the discourse while recurring to its commencement, xv. 2, at the same time in point of meaning comes to a close: but, on the other hand, the apodosis is plainly missing, since *ולא יוכל* completely answers to *נלאה* in the first member. The true concluding sentence, therefore, must have been lost by an error in transcription, and perhaps Yéremyá had it before him in his day, inasmuch as the words, *יבוש מואב מִכְמוֹשׁ* xlvi. 13, comp. vv. 7, 35, would be quite suitable here.

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The two following oracles, xxi. 11-17, were both of them originally of the same extreme brevity, each of them consisting of but two verses; for whoever can recognise Yesaya's own language will perceive that he is not speaking before ver. 15, but then most certainly commences in his own most characteristic language. We have here, therefore, oracles of a very peculiar nature with regard to their form and style. We find nowhere else oracles of such great brevity, and conveyed in language of such an enigmatical complexion. It is as if one still heard the most ancient voices, with their almost provoking laconism and biting subtlety of utterance, which are intended the more effectually to spur the hearer on to meditate upon the meaning of what is thus put before him, and to search out what the ultimate intention of the oracle is. In fact, these oracles have in this respect a great deal of similarity with the Heathen oracles, *e.g.*, those of the Greeks: and yet Yesaya

for good reasons deigned to appropriate and amplify them. That they are very old follows from these characteristics. But if we inquire more particularly as to their age and authorship, we might be induced to suppose that they owe their origin to the second of the prophets of Yuda mentioned above, to whom we are indebted for the oracle xvi. 1-6, (1) because an oracle concerning Edóm would appear to be more likely to come from a prophet living in Jerusalem; but this reason is not free from uncertainty, especially in the case of such a short piece; (2) because the word נָזַר, *fugitive*, ver. 14, occurs in that prophet as a very favourite expression, xvi. 2, 3; but Yesaya also uses it here, ver. 15, and elsewhere, while in poetry generally it is by no means rare. In fact, we have every reason to suppose in the case of these pieces, as in the case of the larger of the previous ones, that an ancient prophet of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes was their author, whether he was the same as the author whom we found there, ch. xv.-xvi., or another in any case very much like him. The forms אֶתְּיָי, בְּעָי, הַבְּעָיִן, ver. 12, אֶתְּיָי or more correctly הַתְּיָי, ver. 14, comp. §§ 142*a*, 194*a*, are nowhere else so frequent as here;\* the orthography אֶתְּיָי, ver. 12, is also peculiar. And the exceedingly brief and pointed manner of the discourse seems to be very unlike the soft and overflowing style of chapters xv. and xvi. We have, here, therefore, perhaps the most ancient oracles that have been preserved in the Old Testament of prophets after the division of the Davîdic kingdom.

If the heading, ver. 11, had been original, it might be supposed, first, that the Arabian tribe *Dûma*, which is mentioned elsewhere only in Gen. xxv. 14, was visited in that early period by some sudden but protracted calamity, probably the same which the next oracle looks upon as affecting all other Arabian tribes. But in order to understand the first words, ver. 11, we should, secondly, have to suppose that the

\* In Yesaya the form יִכְלִיִּין is found only in the pause (xvii. 12); xxxi. 3 (xxxiii. 7), and in that case not always, i. 28.



report of the calamity had reached the prophet by way of Se'ir, *i.e.* Edóm. But in that case it does not appear why the prophet should merely commence with the mention of Se'ir, and stop there; the words, ver. 11, indicate that Edóm had itself so severely suffered at that time that the prophet seemed to hear a loud voice, rising involuntarily from its midst, and calling to him for help and explanation, a voice which he feels compelled to answer. The LXX, two Hebrew MSS., and the *Arab. Polyg.* have actually preferred to read אֶדוֹם instead of דוֹמָה, as if we had here simply an oracle concerning *Edóm*. We do not know whether this was not purely a conjecture on their part, and we may rather suppose that the heading is intended to mean an *Oracle of Silence*, and owes its position here to the wit of a later reader, inasmuch as the import of the oracle at all events issues in the fact that the prophet who has been called upon to speak prefers to be as good as silent. In any case, we name the piece as the oracle,

### 3. Concerning Edom, ch. xxi. 11, 12.

This very smallest piece has the most beautiful prophetic import. Every genuine prophet, as we saw, Vol. I. p. 28, sq., must always stand upon his watch-tower, as it were, in the divine consideration of the fortunes of all men and nations, and must know what has shortly to come to pass. Accordingly it seems to our prophet precisely at this moment that a troubled voice is calling to him from the above district, enquiring whether the long terrible night (of calamity, Job xxxv. 10) is not yet past? what o'clock it is in the night?—But however glad he would be to return a pleasant answer, he finds it impossible. In accordance with the higher consideration that those nations which are so deeply sunk in heathenism must be much more seriously chastised before they will arrive at the truth, he is unable to give a favourable reply, and veils, with a certain degree of evasion, the mournful anticipation of a still longer duration of this night. The whole forms the shortest



possible oracle, and is nevertheless pregnant with thought, clear, and finished.—As this prophet is, therefore, a very ancient one, we might even think that the attack upon Edóm proceeded at that time from Yuda (comp. *History of Israel*, IV. 54 (iii. 510 sq.)), and that our prophet as living in the Northern kingdom returned such a brief answer, for the very reason that this kingdom as hostile to Yuda might be easily considered by Edom as friendly to it. Yet the enemy might have been the same as that that appears in the next piece.

## XXI.

*High-Oracle of Silence.*

11      *To me one calleth\* from Se'îr: "watchman, what of the night? watchman, what of the night?" || The watchman saith: "The morning hath come—and also the night! If ye will enquire, enquire ye! return ye, come!" ||*

The repetition of the question, ver. 11, portrays the distress of the enquirers. The answer, ver. 12, is already contained in the words: morning is come—and also night! everything has its time, and if formerly there came a bright, cheerful morning, now the night is here and will not depart very soon: I cannot give you any better comfort. In order, however, to make it quite clear that this is all he has to say, he adds: "*if ye desire to ask, ask ye!*" I have nothing to say against your enquiry of the prophet, but *return, come!* in the future when ye return put new enquiries; for the present I have nothing further to say. Comp. *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.* V. p. 246 sq.

Precisely this rare word פֶּעַר is peculiar to our prophet, and

\* Germ.: "Zu mir ruft es." For the indefinite force of the part., see § 200.—Tr.

is found elsewhere only in the sense of to *search through*, Ob. ver. 6.—לִי, ver. 11, has this form manifestly only on account of the pause, § 146 e, yet that is also peculiar.

#### 4. Concerning the Arabians, ch. xxi. 13-17.

The caravans of the Arabian tribe Dedân, which had become very rich and powerful by the trade of carrying, had been evidently at the time of the older prophet attacked by superior enemies and compelled to make an ignominious flight, so that the proud tribe must be content in its complete helplessness to receive the most necessary means of living from the favour of others, *e.g.* of those dwelling in the land Tæmâ (Job vi. 19). Inasmuch as these Arabs had already wandered far from the true religion, it cannot be surprising that the older prophet feels himself compelled to address to this tribe also no word of consolation, but rather dismisses it with delicate irony.

But in Yesaya's days, the Assyrian power, endeavouring to become a world-wide monarchy, threatened not in vain all these Arab tribes also, as indeed Sanherhib is called also king of the Arabs, Herod. ii. 141. Accordingly, Yesaya applies and amplifies the old oracle in such a way that he expresses the anticipation, that upon the first defeat which the Arabs had then already suffered from the Assyrians, a much greater humiliation of all the predatory Arab tribes would soon follow: and he comprehends all these tribes in an original manner under the name of *Qedar*, which was at that time a prominent tribe. When, therefore, that historical event of recent occurrence has been brought forward in the first strophe, vv. 13-15, the real prophetic anticipation is introduced in the second strophe, vv. 16, 17.

#### *High-Oracle concerning the Steppe (Arabia).*

##### 1.

#### XXI.

13     *In the forest in steppes must ye pass the*

*night, ye caravans of Dedân? || To meet the thirsty bring ye water, ye inhabitants of the land Tæmâ! with his bread anticipate*  
 15 *the fugitive! ||* Because they fled before swords,  
 | before the drawn sword and before the bent bow,  
 and before the stress of war! ||

## 2.

For thus saith the Lord unto me: | Within a year like a hireling's years—and all Qedar's glory is at an end: || and the remnant of the bowmen's force\* of the brave sons of Qedar will be few! | for Yahvé Israel's God hath spoken it. ||

It cannot be too distinctly borne in mind that this Oracle, when separated from its additions in the pure form in which the old prophet uttered it, vv. 13, 14, is exactly like the previous one in respect of its deterrent and sharp tone, notwithstanding its numerous dissimilarities. *In forests, even in steppes*, (the last worse than the first) *must ye pass the night*, without being able to find any caravansary or convenient places for encamping? That is hard! But I do not know anything better for you; and at best one can only call upon the neighbouring Tæmâ to meet the fugitive with water, with *his*, i.e., that which is necessary for him, bread of dependence: it is hard to be compelled to accept such bread, but I know nothing better! Let no more be said! The curtain descends, and it is sufficiently indicated that they deserve nothing better. The manner of expression, therefore, is different from that of the previous oracle, and yet it amounts to the same thing. It is remarkable with what tact Yesaya connects his further elucidation and application, ver. 15, with the last word ver. 14.

הִיָּיָה, ver. 14, is according to this pointing the *imper.*, §. 141 a,

\* Germ.: *bogenzahl*.—Tr.

the *perf.*, would have to be הָרִי, acc. §. 142 *a*. But later punctuators must have misunderstood this and in consequence have incorrectly written קָדְמוֹ instead of קָדְמוֹ; the accents also of ver. 14 are incorrect.

It is evident on the very face of it that עֲרַב, ver. 13, in the ancient oracle, cannot mean *Arabia*, but as equal to עֲרָבָה retains fully its primary meaning, *steppe*. That the Arabians came gradually to be denominated from their *steppes*, is clearly a custom which did not arise before the 7th cent., and is first met with in Jer. iii. 3; Ez. xxvii. 21, and later writers. Not before this time, therefore, for this reason amongst others, can a new editor of the book of Yesaya have added the heading *High-Oracle on Arabia*, (the Arabs) ver. 13: he took the word עֲרַב from the commencement of the piece, understood it in this more modern sense, and could thus also connect the prep. בְּ, in accordance with an old usage ("Zech." ix. 1), with מִשָּׁא in a new sense. In its original meaning the word must be understood acc. §. 176 *a*.

That the most northern Arabs (for in reality it is these only who are intended in such cases) were distinguished bowmen, ver. 17, is well known, Gen. xxi. 20.

#### IV.—YESAYA'S FOURTH BOOK.

But for the time Yesaya in vain summoned the nation, by his moving representation, ch. i. and the entire previous book, to repentance; it still lacked the requisite earnestness and self-denial, and soon had its attention attracted into another direction. The Assyrians, without doubt because those small nations referred to in ch. i. (see *ante* p. 119) were finally unable to effect much against Jerusalem, sent an army against it, most likely from the north-east, perhaps by the same road which our prophet subsequently, x. 28-32, looked upon as the one to be taken by an Assyrian army marching against Jerusalem. An army was sent from Jerusalem against the Assyrians, but at



the sight of these northern warriors, who were such as it had never seen before, the army fled immediately, and in consequence the people of Jerusalem hastened to put an end to the Assyrian devastation of the land by a treaty of peace. Indeed it appeared in Jerusalem as if no calamity had occurred, and there had been no great humiliation of the nation; it seemed too, as if the people wished to defy the admonitions of the prophet. As appears from xxii. 1 sq., the people on the conclusion of peace gave themselves up to the most uncontrolled rejoicing, and the intoxication of material pleasures. It was as if they wished to stifle by means of a whirl of wild extravagance the irrepressible thought of the near destruction, and as if they would drown the voice of the prophet with uproarious amusements. But that was more than the prophet could bear. He saw it, and was astonished. He collected himself, and proclaimed to the people, who were lost in wild joy, the mournful thought which their conduct had given rise to within him. Nothing is more disgraceful in itself, as nothing contains more elements of future trouble, than for a nation to endeavour to drown a disgrace, which it has brought upon itself, by means of thoughtlessness and pleasure-hunting: and at that time Yesaya must either give the lie to all his earlier efforts, or he was compelled to labour still more zealously and unweariedly for the same truths as he had hitherto defended. Accordingly he laboured manifestly with the greater energy in all directions during those days, sought to hold back the people from blindly running into the yawning abyss which it had made for itself, and endeavoured in a general way to labour for a genuine reform of the whole kingdom, from its highest to its lowest members. We still possess in the two pieces, ch. xxii. the most self-evident records of his labours at that time, which were most unsuccessful, although they cost him the greatest effort. And inasmuch as these pieces are found precisely here just after the end of the previous book, and then the piece, ch. xxiii. can quite well follow, we may with reason conclude that Yesaya



very soon republished his former book with the addition of these supplements, his assistants, mentioned above, p. 61, without doubt again lending him their help.

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1. *The Harangue against the People*, ch. xxii. 1-14.

This harangue comprises the essential things that Yesaya had uttered face to face with the whole people on that day of mad intoxication. It is an oration born of human astonishment and sorrow, which, however, as the depth of the matter comes to be more closely considered, changes into an overwhelming threat, such as does not elsewhere occur in our prophet, but which the import of this moment fully justifies. The prophet cannot join in this noise, if for no other reasons, on account of the shameful defeat which preceded it, and because he anticipates worse things from a no distant future, vv. 1-5; but when he considers how little the nation was brought by the recent great danger to fix its attention on better things, vv. 6-11; when he considers how it now converts the serious call to repentance into an antithesis which mocks this call, and gives itself over to wild rejoicing, thereby to escape from the divine seriousness of the position,—he is compelled to declare that there is here the greatest and most serious sin that men are capable of, the sin against the Holy Spirit, vv. 12-14.—All this in one outburst, yet in three short strophes, the last of which closes in the greatest agitation, and with great rapidity and brevity in consequence. The later collector gave to the piece, from ver. 5, the heading:—

*High-oracle of the Oracle-valley.*

1.

XXII.

1. What hast thou then that thou art all-together gone up to the house-roofs? || O thou filled with clamours, thou noisy city jubilant place! | thy

5 slain are not the slain of the sword, not the fallen in battle: || all thy captains fled together from the bow, were made prisoners, | all of thine who were found were made prisoners all-together, sped far away. || Therefore say I: look away from me, let me weep bitterly, | press not to comfort me on the desolation of the daughter of my people! || for a day of alarm and assault and amazement hath the Lord Yahvé of Hosts in the Oracle-valley! | to carnage careereth Qîr, and Shôa is at the mount! ||

## 2.

And 'Aelam carried the quiver in a line of horsemen, | and Qîr made bare the shield; || and already were thy choicest valleys full of horse, | — and the cavalry — yea they rushed against the gates, || and he uncovered Yuda's covering: | then thou lookedst on that day at the armour of the Forest-house, || and the clefts of the David city ye saw how many they were, | and collected the water of the lower pool, || and the houses of Jerusalem ye numbered, | and pulled down the houses to fortify the wall, || and a basin ye made between the double-wall for the water of the old pool, | — but ye looked not unto him that did it, and him that formed it from afar ye saw not! ||

## 3.

And the Lord Yahvé of Hosts called indeed on that day | to weeping and to lamentation, and to cutting off the hair and to putting on sackcloth: || but behold joy and gladness, slaughtering oxen

and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine, |  
 eating and drinking, for tomorrow we die! || Thus  
 in mine ears revealed Yahvé of Hosts: | never  
 shall this sin be forgiven you, till ye die! saith  
 the Lord Yahvé of Hosts. ||

1. The prophet as he appears in public unexpectedly beholds the whole city upon the house-tops, for the purpose, as appears from ver. 2, and further from ver. 13, of holding unusual feasts of rejoicing, with unbounded merriment, the inhabitants of every house being accustomed on such occasions to assemble upon their flat roofs, Judg. xvi. 27; Neh. viii. 16. It is clear that the holiday was the celebration of the dishonourable conclusion of peace with the Assyrians; for the first thing that Yesaya speaks in opposition to the wild uproar (v. 14) of which the city is too lavish, is that it has no ground for rejoicing, inasmuch as its lost men did not fall in honourable battle, but fled, together with their captains, disgracefully before the Assyrian (ver. 6), or were taken prisoners in their flight, vv. 2, 3. On that account he desires to be left to weep bitterly, since he foresees at the same time that for his beloved native city so much the greater suffering must soon follow the present foolish joy, and that Yahvé had already in his mind a day when every conceivable calamity would break over the sacred city, when no help would be known against the wild hosts of those who would fall suddenly upon the city and the enemy who would attack the sacred hill in wild rage! vv. 4, 5. And how great was the prophet's grief that this must take place *in the valley of vision*, i.e. acc. Vol. i. p. 33, *of the Oracle*, in the lower part of the city of Jerusalem, where he himself and many others before him had preached the divine word, alas, generally in vain!

2. For when the nations farthest to the east ('Aelam) and to the north (Qîr, Amos. i. 5) advanced in well-arranged and excel-

lently armed cavalry troops (comp. xxi. 9), when even the fairest valleys around the city had been already occupied, the horsemen made sallies even to the very gate of Jerusalem, yea, when Yahvé *made bare the veil of Yuda*, i.e. showed wholly without veil and openly the inmost secret condition, and accordingly the real weakness of the state to the enemy—then the magnates of the kingdom did indeed look anxiously after every form of external protection and defence, preparing themselves for a siege (which nevertheless did not come): but to the real originator of the calamity, to Yahvé who had long since silently prepared and then announced it by his prophets, to him they did not look, to discover and to do his will.

3. On the contrary, when they were at that time expressly summoned by the prophet to serious repentance and penance, instead of that they gave themselves up to the most unrestrained and senseless pleasure, as if by their thoughtlessness, to defy the thought of the speedy fall as is graphically described, ver. 13 (1 Cor. xv. 32). But the prophet accordingly hears sounding clearly in his ears the dreadful word of Yahvé (v. 9), “this sin of intentional resistance of the Holy Spirit is unpardonable, and must bring them step by step, without any break, to ruin, so that nothing but death can put an end to the process of destruction,” ver. 14, comp. xxx. 13, 14.

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xxii. 3. It is best, contrary to the accents, to connect מִקֶּשֶׁת with the foregoing words, comp. ver. 6.—The words, ver. 4, even at the recollection of such a time of extreme distress, are quite unusual, in order that what cannot in any way be described may be forcibly adumbrated: the English words *alarm and assault and amazement*, are a weak imitation of the Hebrew.\* But this sound-painting extends to the last words

\* The German language is better able to render the volume and force of Hebrew words than the English. Ewald's words are: *bedrängung und bestürmung und bestürzung*. Another English imitation would be: *distress and destruction and dismay*.—Tr.



of the verse. In the first edition they were rendered: *by unwalling the wall and war-shout against the mountain!* But in the second vol. p. 301, the present rendering was already proposed. It is quite certain that *the mountain* as forming the antithesis to the above-named *ravine*, must be *SSion*: but whether קר is intended to correspond to this as one of its *sides*, or rather as its *wall*, is the more uncertain since Yesaya does not use it elsewhere. It is rather from the outset the more probable that it denotes in this passage a wild, warlike northern nation, which the Assyrians employed, answering to the Qîr mentioned, Vol. i. p. 159, inasmuch as it is immediately resumed, ver. 6, at the commencement of the next strophe; and that שׂוּץ was a nation of this kind will appear below at Ez. xxiii. 23. As indicating the signification of קרקר, Num. xxiv. 17 cannot be quoted, since it has in that place to give way to another reading; but the Arab. *rakâ to perforate, excavate, destroy*; and in any case, this very rare word is here used only for the sake of the paronomasia; from which fact it follows further that קר, as the principal word upon which the play is made, can only be taken as an important proper-name. The paronomasia is rendered freely in the translation.\*

The word שׂוּץ ver. 7, as is shown by the context, cannot here mean, as Ps. iii. 7, to take up a firm position, or to *encamp*, but must signify *to attack* or *to storm*, like שׂוּץ, 1 Kings xx. 12; Ez. xxi. 21. With regard to the much misunderstood וְהִתְּחַלֵּץ at the commencement of ver. 7, see §. 345 b.—The figure of *uncovering the wrapper*, or the veil, of a capital, ver. 8, (and that Yuda was as appropriate in such a connexion as Jerusalem, follows from what was said vol. I. p. 189 sq.) was the more natural when in more elevated language it was the custom to speak of a capital as a *virgin*, comp. Arab. *kashafa*,

\* Ewald's free rendering of מְקַרְקֵר קר is: *wie ein stier raset Qîr*, which owing to the slight difference of meaning between the English word *steer* and the Germ. *stier*, could not be reproduced in the translation of the Hebrew text. The rendering substituted is in any case not freer than the author's.—Tr.



Tab. I. p. 208. 3, *hataka sitra* or *tahattaka* Freytag's *Chrest.* p. 48. 7; Borhaneldin *enchir. stud.* p. 8, ver. 1, and the more rare Syriac words in the Carm. de Alex. p. 97. 7, 11, edit. Knös.

The preparations against the siege, vv. 8-11, are: (1) examination of the *forest-house*, *i.e.*, of the armoury built with cedars from the forest (Lebanon, Kings vii. 2-6; x. 17; Neh. iii. 19 (*History of Israel*, III., 249, (III. p. 341))); (2) examination of the condition of the walls of the citadel and the diversion of those pools which were in a too exposed position (*History of Israel*, III. 253 sq.; IV. 176 (III. 347 sq.; 672)); (3) demolition of many of the houses which were built outside the walls and gates of the city, lest they should serve a besieging enemy as outworks against the city-walls; comp. *History of Israel*, IV. 272 (III. 805). (Comp. similar precautions, vii. 3 sq.)

The words, ver. 12, might seem to refer to the great oration, chap. i., and for that reason also we might be inclined to consider the enemies described in ch. i. as the same as those who are here meant, vv. 6-8. As was said above, the difference of date is in any case small; yet the words, ver. 12, rather point to an exhortation to repentance, and the way in which the enemies are described, ch. i., differs considerably from that found here. In any case, the orations of ch. xxii. are of later date than that of ch. i.; and the position of the three pieces of ch. xxii. and xxiii. is most easily explained by the supposition that we have in the book before us a new edition of that earlier book. Further, comp. *Jahrb. der Bibl. wiss.* I. p. 40 sq.; VII. p. 129.

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## 2. The Harangue against Shebnâ.

Probably about the same time Yesaya addressed the following harangue to a particular man in Jerusalem, one of the magnates, who had been in general terms often censured by the prophet,

and whose position was at that particular moment of the greatest importance as regards the general affairs of the realm. As appears from ver. 16 and the foreign sound of his name, he was not a native Hebrew, but a foreigner, whom probably the previous king Ahaz had raised to the great dignity of a steward of the royal house and court, (comp. *History of Israel*, III. p. 268 (III. p. 367), a dignity which he retained for some time under the next king Hizqia. Yesaya's words leave no doubt that the proud foreigner had in many ways misused his dignity and power, *e.g.*, by showing favour to unworthy men (comp. vv. 23-25); and he was just about to immortalize his name and family in Jerusalem by the erection of a family tomb, the ancients setting much store by the sanctity of such family tombs; it seemed as if this man would insolently defy the future, while his position in Jerusalem had long been without any moral support. It was then that Yesaya felt himself impelled by the spirit to deprive him of this desire, by the prediction that instead of his doing this a still more powerful hand would soon lay hold of him and hurl him into exile, by the instrumentality of the Assyrian whose new attack the previous piece, xxii. 5, had just anticipated, vv. 16-19, comp. Amos vii. 17. And because at the same time another man in Jerusalem, of the name of Elyaqîm, seemed to be more worthy of this position, the prophetic anticipation goes on to represent him, vv. 20-24, as the man chosen by Yahvé and found worthy to succeed to Shebnâ's office, and closes, ver. 25, with the expectation that the unworthy and injurious dependents of the latter will then also fall, as an evident sign that the kingdom was then still more seriously injured by the immoral favourites of the man than by himself. The arrangement of the oration is, therefore, quite the same as that of the preceding one; as a whole it is a little shorter.

It is obvious that the king Hizqia, although he might gladly listen to the prophet, was not necessitated at once to quite dis-

miss the man on account of this merely prophetic harangue and Divine threat; the prophet speaks throughout in the form of anticipation only, not as issuing commands. At the same time, we see from xxxvi. 3; xxxvii. 2, that a few years subsequently Elyaqîm was raised to this post, while Shebnâ was removed to another ministerial position, whereby probably the main complaint against him, that of having in the past promoted unworthy favourites, was finally settled. It is always wrong to wish to precipitate a Minister if there is no better substitute for him to be had.

## 1.

## XXII.

15 Thus saith the Lord Yahvé of Hosts: Go appear before this high officer, even before Shebnâ the steward of the house: || What hast thou here and whom hast thou here, that thou hewest-out for thee here a tomb, | hewing-out the height for his tomb, hollowing in the rock a dwelling for himself? || Behold Yahvé will hurl hurl thee thou great man, | and grasp grasp thee, || rolling-up as a ball roll roll thee up | — into a wide-bordered land; | there shalt thou die and there thy glorious chariots, thou shame of the house of thy lord! || So I thrust thee from thy post, | and from thy position will he uproot thee. ||

## 2.

20 But then on that day, | I summon my servant Elyaqîm the son of Hilqia, || and clothe him with thy robe, and with thy girdle I gird him, | and thy government I transfer to him, so that he will be a father to Jerusalem's inhabitants and to Yuda's house; || and I lay the key of the house of David

upon his shoulder, | so that he openeth while none shutteth, and shutteth while none openeth. || And I drive him as a nail into a sure place, | so that he will be a seat of honour to his father's house, || and upon him hangeth all the glory of his father's house, the shoots and the sprouts, all the dainty vessels, | alike the vessels of bowls and all the vessels of pitchers. ||

## 3.

25 On that day, saith Yahvé of Hosts, will the nail which is driven into a sure place give way, | it will be cut off and falleth, and the burden which hangeth upon it will be destroyed: | for Yahvé said it. ||

At the very commencement of the oration, ver. 15, its character is indicated, Shebnâ being called at once, quite contrary to Yesaya's customary manner, contemptuously *this* minister (comp. the Latin *iste*). And the first word addressed to him, ver. 16, forthwith inquires of the proud man, what rights and what ancestors he has, giving him a title to erect here a family tomb, as if he were a native, a man who will further establish his lasting residence (comp. xiv. 18 ; Ecc. xii. 5) upon the summit of a rock, as if he desired for all time to come to look proudly down upon the holy city, Job xxi. 32. But precisely because thou, great man, (comp. on Ps. lii. 3\*) art resolved to establish thyself here against the Divine will, he will seize thee with a mighty hand, and, rolling thee into a round mass (thou

\* On this passage, *Dichter des A. B. I. b.*, p. 174, the author maintains that גִּבּוֹר *hero*, as well as גִּבּוֹר, Germ. *mann*, Eng. *strong man*, the word used by Yesaya, in later usage lost its ancient elevated and noble signification, through the fault of the deteriorated magnates, and gradually sank to the semi-bantering semi-malicious meaning which the ancient German name *held* (*hero*), sometimes now bears. Comp., perhaps our old English word, *worthy* = *hero*.—Tr.

mayest resist or not), hurl thee as a light ball far away out of the holy land into a distant vast land, into a waste, together with thy proud chariots (2 Sam. xv. 1), where thou, unworthy man, whose position brings the royal house into disgrace, mayest perish! vv. 17-19, uttered at first vv. 17, 18<sub>a</sub>, with uncommon force and annihilating severity, only towards the end, ver. 19, becoming calmer, passing therefore also from the first into the third person, as xiv. 30.—Afterwards Elyaqîm may, from the divine point of view, be clothed with the official insignia of this high dignity, the official vestment with the broad and brilliant girdle, that he may be a provident father to the whole country (ix. 5), and exercise in the royal house the full privilege and the full authority to do and to leave undone, to open and to shut, as much as any other man who gets laid upon his shoulder this no less important than difficult office of the Keys (*i.e.*, house-stewardship), vv. 20-22. But he, personally irreproachable and springing from a noble house, will not be liable to such a fall as Shebnâ, but maintain his position like a nail driven into a secure place, so firmly that by his throne and firm seat his entire paternal house also feels itself honoured, and upon this nail the entire nobility of his family, *i.e.*, all the members of this magnificent family, will hang, and be borne like a number of vessels upon a strong nail in a wall, also the younger members of the house (Elyaqîm was undoubtedly already advanced in life), or the shoots and the sprouts like graceful vessels of all kinds, and the lowly as well as the exalted ones of the wide-spread branches of the family, as it were both the low, shallow bowls and the high pitchers. Thus we have here figure upon figure; the figure of the *nail* is not very uncommon, Zech. x. 4; Ezra, ix. 8, 9: If the dependants of the minister Shebnâ had not excited such desires, the prophet would hardly have mentioned thus prospectively the followers of his future successor: but he now returns expressly, ver. 25, to the followers of Shebnâ, who though at present he holds his place as a nail driven into a



sure place, (namely, in the Davídic house) will soon violently fall with the entire burden which he supports.

The Arab. phrase *thabatat lahu autád*, Arab. Fâqih. p. 27 *medio*; 120, 9 *a fin.*, answers to the figure of a *nail*.—It follows from ver. 21, that the official attire of the prime minister was at that time kept in the royal palace and was transmitted from one minister to another, just as the official attire of the High Priest in the Persian and subsequent times was always kept in the temple.

This piece is further remarkable inasmuch as it permits us to see more closely into the relations of the principal parties in the kingdom at that period. In any kingdom in which the humour and arbitrary will of a king and royal family are not suffered to have the sway, but in which, on the contrary, especially law and religion are designed to rule, and actually have ruled with some degree of consistency, as was the case in the kingdom of the people of Israel, and particularly in Jerusalem, the various tendencies and efforts often take a distinct form and representative character in the hereditary principles of powerful houses (or families), whose ancestors had fought and suffered, conquered and ruled in their cause. In accordance with this fact, it may also be observed that a new class of protectors and dependants often arises, the relatives of the house and the friends of the same principles attaching themselves gladly to the head of a powerful family. This is not the common and legal relation of the *cliens* and *patronus* (see *Alterthümer* p. 287 (248): it is an entirely free, unrestricted relation, which must assume the form dictated by an understanding of the higher principles of the kingdom and by the courage which men have to identify themselves with them. When such a relation is established it may powerfully affect the history of a kingdom. We shall subsequently find it recurring when we come to the book of Yéremyá.

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3. *Concerning Tyre.*

## Ch. xxiii.

Vv. 1-14 form a complete piece concerning Tyre ; it is a piece of three strophes complete in itself, and so far as its subject-matter is concerned may belong to the time of Yesaya. We know, in a somewhat more detailed form, from Josephus (*Antiq.* ix. 14), that Salmanassar conquered the whole of continental Phœnicia and laid siege to the island Tyre for a long period, although without ultimate success ; and the Assyrians, are expressly named, ver. 13, as the dangerous enemy. Just at the commencement, when Assyria advanced with a great force against Phœnicia, a prophet may have thus spoken : and that the island Tyre was in the end not conquered, detracts nothing from the true prophetic import and value of the utterance. For that which really calls forth the righteous threats of the prophet against Tyre, is its greed of gain, its arrogance, and its oppression of foreign lands, the three fundamental vices of this mercantile state, which was then at the climax of its prosperity ; and the prophetic utterance falls into three strophes of medium length having reference to these three sins, vv. 1-5 ; 6-9 ; 10-14. The prophet might indeed lament over the downfall of so much power and glory ; and, as a fact, the whole piece bears more especially the character of a prophetic elegy upon the certain fall of the Phœnician rule, each strophe beginning, or, as is more suitable for the last two, closing with a summons to lamentation. To this extent the piece is a cry of lamentation over Tyre, in relation (1) to the destruction of trade, (2) to the destruction of the world-wide dominions of these luxurious people, (3) to the destruction of her oppression of even foreign countries. But precisely as a prophet, he could not fail to see clearly the eternal necessity of the downfall of a power which reposed upon such foundations, and must overcome his first human astonishment at this fall the moment he reflected upon the divine causes which were

here at work. They are ever valid and know no change, and in conformity with these Tyre was necessitated sooner or later to lose its power; or if it did not wholly lose it so soon as the prophet then anticipated, and if it recovered from the first blow for a few centuries, there was nevertheless (as subsequent history has shown) no firm condition of things which could defy all attacks.

The poetical art of the piece is in a very high degree finished. Since the whole takes the form of a cry of woe, the first strophe, and the second also almost immediately, begins with it; but as the first note of this woe, beginning with the proud Tarshîsh ships, forms the key-note of the whole, it occurs again at the end of the first, second, and the third strophes. It is true, it is now not found after ver. 9, but for the additional reason that each of the three strophes ought clearly to have five verses, it must have dropped out. Further, Tarshîsh occurs at the head of each strophe appropriately.

Whether, however, this prophet of the Assyrian period was Yesaya, is very doubtful. It is true, there are many Yesayanic words and thoughts scattered through the piece, *e.g.*, ver. 4 רומם and גדל, as i. 2; עֲלִיזָה vv. 7, 12, as v. 14; xxii. 2; xxxii. 13; הָקֵל ver. 9, as viii. 23; יְרוֹ נֹטָה ver. 11, as v. 25; ver. 13 especially has a strongly Yesayanic ring, comp. xxxii. 14; xvii. 1. On the other hand, other expressions we should not expect, as חֹמַי *coast*, vv. 2, 6, here denotes the island of Tyre as opposed to the whole of Sidonia, *i.e.*, Phœnicia, vv. 2, 4, while in Yesaya's usage, xx. 5, it signifies simply the whole Phœnician coast. Besides, the elevation, magnificence, and energetic brevity of Yesaya are wholly wanting. It looks, therefore, as if a younger contemporary and disciple of Yesaya were the author, just as in ch. xxxiii. a similar supposition has to be made; and inasmuch as these disciples, acc. viii. 16, took a considerable part in committing to writing and preserving in a literary form the orations of Yesaya, it is not difficult to understand how some oracles of

the disciples should find their way into the same book.—It might also be conjectured that the piece was first written on Nabukodrossor's\* siege; yet no sufficient reason can be produced to justify such a conjecture, not even this, that the word *Kanaanites*, ver. 8, in the meaning of *merchants*, appears to be according to a somewhat later usage, Prov. xxxi. 24; Job xl. 30; and against the conjecture is, that in the entire book of Yesaya as we have it there is no piece from the Chaldæan period.

On the other hand, the last verses, vv. 15-18, can belong neither to the time of Salmanassar nor of Nabukodrossor, the latter of whom besieged the island Tyre a second time and for a longer period. These verses prophesy that Tyre will be forgotten for 70 years, remain, therefore, almost completely powerless and ruined, but after that time will rise again to some degree of power; yet its wealth, gained by universal trade, will in the end be devoted to the requirements of the true religion. 'This thought has no real connexion with the previous prophecy of the destruction of the island fortress; for then the idea of such a resuscitation of the ruined Tyre is not in the most distant manner on the horizon of the prophet's vision, and while its three strophes form a complete and distinct whole, this postscript has not been in any way prepared for or rendered possible, neither by the subject-matter, nor by the figures and images of the foregoing prophecy. On the contrary, it cannot have been an earlier prophet than one living at the commencement of the Persian period who could write thus. At the close of the Chaldæan rule, which lasted in round numbers 70 years, all the countries which had up to that time been oppressed revived, and Tyre attained a tolerable degree of prosperity once more. The number 70 was at that time in prevailing use in such connexions, Zech. i. 12, and at that period when the new Jerusalem was very poor and in necessi-

\* On the orthography of the name, see *Hist. of Israel*, iv. 256 (III. 782 note).—Tr.

tous circumstances, and the Messianic hopes were nevertheless excited in a high degree, this anticipation and this wish are quite intelligible, that the sanctuary at Jerusalem would finally reap the benefit of Tyre's actual wealth, when Tyre, together with all other heathen nations, should turn to the true God. Indeed, it appeared at length the necessary supplement to the ancient oracle, that Tyre should again rise from its ruins and resort to its former mercantile arts, from which it appeared that it could not desist, but only for the divine end, that in this way also the final prosperity of the divine kingdom might be promoted. The language also points to this period. We have here, therefore, a postscript or appendix, of a similar kind and of the same age as ch. xii. (see *infra* p. 239); and both additions are attached to the older pieces, as well as it could be managed; nor is there any doubt but that they are both from the same hand, see vol. I. p. 95.

*High-oracle concerning Tyre.*

1.

XXIII.

- 1     *Wail ye Tarshish-ships!* | for “it is laid waste so that there is no house, no entry!” is from the land of the Kittim announced to them. || — Be dumb ye inhabitants of the coast, | which Sidonia’s merchant the sea-farer replenished, || and whose gain was the Nile’s seed, the river’s harvest upon many waters, | so that she became a mart of the nations. || — Be ashamed Sidonia, for the Sea, the Sea’s stronghold spake thus: “I have not travailed nor brought forth, not reared youths nor brought-up virgins!” || — When the report cometh to Egypt, they will tremble there, | when the report of Tyrus. ||



## 2.

Migrate to Tarshîsh, | wail inhabitants of the coast! || —“Is this your exultant [city], whose origin is from the days of the past, | whose feet carry her far away to sojourn? || Who hath counselled this concerning Tyre the bestower of crowns, | whose merchants [are] princes, whose traders the honoured of the earth?” || Yahvé of Hosts hath counselled it, to profane the pride of all splendour, to humble all the honoured of the earth! || [*Wail ye Tarshîsh-ships, that your fortress is destroyed!*]

## 3.

- 10 Spread over thy land like the Nile, | thou daughter Tarshîsh! there is no more a bridle. || His hand he stretched over the Sea, made kingdoms quake, | Yahvé commanded concerning Kanáan to destroy its strongholds; || and said: “thou shalt not go on longer to exult, thou violated virgin daughter Ssidon! | to the Kittim arise migrate! neither there will it be peaceful for thee.” || —“Behold the land of the Kanáanites—this people is no more, Asshur hath made it a desert; | they raised their watch-towers, built their palaces: he hath laid it in ruins!” || — *Wail ye Tarshîsh-ships, | that your stronghold is destroyed!* ||

- 15 But on that day—then will Tyre be forgotten seventy years like the years of one king; | after seventy years it will fare with Tyre as in the song concerning the harlot: ||  
     take the harp, go round the city,—thou forgotten harlot!  
     play well, sing much—that thou mayest be remembered.  
 For after seventy years Yahvé will visit Tyre, so that she cometh again to

her harlot-hire; | and she playeth the harlot then with all kingdoms on the face of the earth. || — Yet her gains and harlot-hire will be consecrated to Yahvé, not laid-up nor hoarded: | but to those who dwell before Yahvé her gains will come, to eat to fulness and for stately attire. ||

1. Wail, become dumb with terror, blush and tremble, must all who are immediately or distantly connected with the prosperity of this over-rich Tyre. The prophet takes a wide glance that he may include everything: (1) the great Tartessus-ships must wail (ii. 16), to which on their homeward voyage from Spain, when they have only reached the Kittim-land, *i.e.*, Kypros, the powerful Phœnician colony, the evil tidings are announced, that everything is destroyed to the very foundation, without leaving a house, an entrance where they might find protection, ver. 1.—(2) The inhabitants of the strong Tyrian island must be filled with alarm, which being filled with seafaring merchants, and especially busied with the rich trade in Egyptian corn (comp. ver. 5), was a market for all nations, vv. 2, 3. — (3) All Sidonia (*i.e.*, the entire Sidonian-Phœnician federated state) must blush, inasmuch as its strongest protection, the island Tyre, is laid waste, inasmuch as the sea itself, therefore, or rather the sea's fortress (ver. 14), as it were, cries out in lamentation, that she has in vain brought up children, is now desolate, ruined, ver. 4. That the name *Ssidôn* is here used in the general sense, follows also from ver 12.—(4) Egypt especially will tremble when it hears the tidings about Tyre, ver. 5; with which sentence, uttered in a more relaxed manner, the first strophe fittingly closes. That the Tyrians very early traded beyond the Egyptian coast is *per se* very probable, and may be gathered from Herod. ii. 112, and Gen. x. 6-20.

2. In the first strophe the human lamentation was so predominant that scarcely a hint as to the causes of it could force its way: it is only the greed of gain which is in a distant way touched upon. But now as the prophet already sees in his spirit the flight of the Tyrians to the distant colonies, luxury and arrogancy are more distinctly brought forward as a second

sin. The very ancient and proud city, which distributed the crowns of distant cities and countries, and whose traders are equal to princes and kings (Jer. xxv. 22), she must now shamefully flee; the prophet himself must counsel her to do so, ver. 6; and if any one in astonishment enquires after the cause of this dishonour and the author of this punishment, vv. 7, 8, the prophet is aware that ultimately it is no other than Yahvé who brings it upon her, and not without cause; her unbounded pride, like all earthly pride, must be humbled! ver. 9.

3. And, further, her oppression of foreign countries, and colonies, *e.g.*, Tartessus, is next censured. Tartessus, freely and without hindrance overflow thy land, as the Nile overflows Egypt without hindrance, Amos viii. 8; ix. 5; there is no more a bridle in the hand of Tyre to restrain thee, ver. 10! Stretching his hand even over the sea, Yahvé hath shaken wide kingdoms by the command to destroy the Phœnician strongholds! the virgin of Phœnicia, Tyre, up to the present unconquered, but now violated, conquered, shall not continue to exult as formerly (ver. 6), but, as was said ver. 5 sq., shall flee, at first to Kypros, but only to find no rest there! vv. 11, 12. This brief image of the violated virgin, ver. 12, is without doubt the precursor of Nah. iii. 5-7, "Isa." xlvii. 1-5. The reason of the sudden daring of the Kittim and the flight of the Tarshîsh ships before them, is given, ver. 13, in the language of the Kittim themselves (just as our prophet, ver. 1, and vv. 7, 8, has introduced other persons of this kind as speaking): land and people of the Phœnicians, they pronounce, is already as good as annihilated by the Assyrians, with all the fair watch-towers (garden-towers, xxxii. 14) and palaces (xxxii. 14) which they erected. Therefore, wail, as was said, ver. 1, ye ships, ver. 14. In this way the discourse treating the entire matter, and hastening to a close at ver. 13, is fully explained.

When, ver. 15, the seventy years are explained by the days of *one* king, *i.e.*, about as long as one king may live and rule, it may be that the author had the instance of Nabukodrossor,

as that nearest at hand, before his eyes, this king having as a fact had a very long life and reign, while he became early the standing representative of the Chaldean rule.—The conception which pervades this appendix, namely, that of a great heathen mercantile city as a harlot, is as foreign to the previous prophecy as to the entire age of Yesaya, it being found first, Nah. iii. 4. But it supplies here an excellent application of the chief thought. As an old harlot cannot well cease from her trade, and though chastised for a time still returns again to her profitable traffic as soon as she regains her freedom: so Tyre, after she has been long forgotten, as soon as Yahvé visits her with his liberating grace, will endeavour to return to her beloved and seductive trade and traffic with all nations, as is said in that well-known satirical song concerning the old harlot, vv. 15-17. Yet the wealth which is thus won will not be hoarded up again for such a long time and in such quantities as was the case in the ancient Tyre, but will very soon find its way, by the conversion of Tyre, to the poor of the holy city, who are now scarcely able to eat till they have had enough, or to clothe themselves decently (comp. "Isa." xlix. 22, 23; lx. 9-12; Haggai and Zech. vi. 10, 11.)

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On vv. 2, 3. Although the direct address to the *coast*, ver. 2, passes with greater calmness into the third person in the continuation of it, ver. 3, the whole from סְהַר to the end is a relative sentence to אֵל.

On ver. 10. מִצֵּה from the Arab, *zahama* and *hazama* to make close, firm, whether it be a girdle or a bridle as here, comp. Arab. *ḥaṭama* and *khaṭama*; *ḥizām* used of a *bridle* in Lebîd's Mo'all, ver. 58.

On ver. 13. When it is considered how accurately the two threes of the members of this verse correspond, how the third answers to the sixth (מִצֵּה = מִצֵּה waste, acc. § 179 b), the

fourth to the fifth (הקִים=עֲרֵר), and how accordingly the first and second members must correspond, there can be no doubt that כְּשֵׁרִים is an early copyist's error for כְּנַעֲנִים, as was more at length remarked, *Gött. Gel. Anz.* 1837, p. 1799. לֹא הִיָּה as xv. 6; Job iii. 16; Ez. xxi. 32.

On מְכַסֶּה ver. 18, comp. § 160 *e*. In general such forms are revived in later writers, and this word belongs manifestly less to the age of Yesaya than to that of the prophet who will come under our notice at "Isa." xiv. 11.



## V.—YESAYA'S FIFTH BOOK.

## Ch. xxviii.-xxxii.

This long oration is complete in itself and finished ; a no less important than extensive piece, in which the prophetic views and judgments with regard to an important question of that age are exhaustively handled from every possible point of view. The time in which this oration falls is at once indicated by the commencement, xxviii. 1-6. Samaria had not yet been taken, but was evidently very imminently threatened, and was clearly approaching its destruction. Nor is there anything in the other part of the long piece which contradicts this date. The Assyrians made themselves felt very oppressively at Jerusalem, xxx. 27-33 ; xxxi. 8, 9, inasmuch as tribute had to be paid to them : but at that time Yuda was not at war with them, and they are not in this piece named plunderers and robbers in such violent language as is used in later orations ; neither is it intimated that they had already greatly exceeded their divine commission to chastise Yuda, as is the case, x. 5 sq. ; xvii. 14 ; xxxiii. 1-24 : on the contrary, the threat is made, that they will overflow the land and closely besiege Jerusalem, xxix. 1-8 ; xxx. 16, 17 ; comp. Mic. iv. 10 sq., Mikha's book in general belonging to almost the same time.

It was at this time that many magnates of the land, alarmed by the constantly growing power of the Assyrians, and probably also with a view to getting rid of their obligations to pay them tribute, very seriously meditated an alliance with Egypt against Assyria, Egypt for its part also being anxious for such alliances. That Yesaya with his powerful voice was against this and all similar alliances was known to these magnates ; they therefore altogether avoided asking him and the other true prophets for their advice on the matter, xxix. 15 ; xxx. 1 ; xxxi. 1, as, in fact, they endeavoured on other occasions to put on one side every true prophet who publicly proclaimed the truth,

xxix. 21 ; xxx. 9-11 ; on the other hand, they found less conscientious prophets and priests of Yahvé who on all matters spoke and acted as they desired, and with whose help they hoped to have spread a sacred halo around their project and to have escaped all danger for the future, xxviii. 14, 15 ; xxix. 13, 14, and, in fact, the affair seems to have already made good progress ; at all events, representatives were already on their way to Egypt, xxx. 6 ; and imagining that they were safe, they with their accomplices, the false teachers, gave themselves up the more fully to their revels and other follies, xxviii. 7 sq.

But while Yesaya could not justify the degenerate government of the Assyrians, the truth was equally clear to his mind, that an Egyptian alliance was both useless and pernicious, because it was really only from the want of pure spiritual strength and genuine confidence that such external aids were sought after at a moment of disgraceful embarrassment. In this time of growing confusion too, his faith, that in Yahvé alone is prosperity and deliverance, remained immovable as a rock. And as he found eternal stability and secure help neither in Assyria nor in Egypt, nor anywhere else but in Yahvé ; and as, further, he saw in the sanctuary at Ssion the image of this imperishable religion, and had himself already experienced in his earlier life how securely this sanctuary could withstand threatening dangers, ch. vii.—ix. 6 : so now in the darkneses of this time the new light was kindled before his prophetic eye, namely, that Ssion would it is true be severely besieged by the Assyrians, as, for instance, Samaria then was, and as a punishment for so many sins and perverse aims, *e.g.*, this very confidence in Egypt ; but that when it was humbled to the uttermost it would evince an imperishable strength, and be gloriously redeemed by Yahvé as the commencement of the new reformed age. In the light of this thought all the darkneses of the time disappeared : neither will Egypt deliver nor Assyria destroy Ssion ; on the contrary, there is coming a severe time of trial and of destruction of thoughtlessness, but

the blessed age will come too, a commencement of reformation may appear shortly. Thus the prophet was able to contend against the false hope, seriously to threaten the false teachers and their followers, and also, which was at that time very necessary in order to sustain the confidence of the wavering, to promise the best comfort. The earlier anticipations as to the form the future may assume give way somewhat to this firmer and still more glorious conception, and it is not until the end of the discourse, xxxii. 9 sq., that they are repeated in a less altered form.

With these wholly heterodox and hitherto unheard-of forebodings and views, Yesaya, whom the people desired to ignore, boldly appeared in the midst of the luxuriating magnates and false teachers, annihilated with the marvellous power of his oratory both the ridicule with which they received him and their entire view of life and of the future, and placed before them his own view, while, on the one hand, he censured, and on the other, comforted and exhorted them. We may also safely suppose that it was greatly due to his exertions that the alliance was not actually formed, although the desire for it continued to be felt by many in Jerusalem, ch. xx., and it appears subsequently to have been revived to that extent that it became known also to the Assyrians, xxxvi. 6.

When we examine the structure and artistic form of the book which Yesaya published upon the basis of that appearance in the assembly, it is clear, and confirmed by the prophet's own words (xxx. 8 sq.), that he cannot have written it until some time after that event. But it is equally certain that it followed the appearance as soon as possible. The book is without narrative in any form: for it bears the marks of having been written while everything was quite fresh in the memory of all, and for the purpose of supplying what the prophet had been unable to bring forward in that severe public collision with his opponents. But although it originated in the midst of a new crisis in the history of the kingdom and of the influential

labours of the prophet, in order that if possible that object, which he probably could not have fully accomplished by a publicly spoken word, might be attained more effectively by a written book, it still presents the position of affairs with no less stormy emphasis than calm and instructive copiousness, and enables us most clearly to see how the literary and the oral labours of the prophet are related to each other. There is no other book of the prophet which handles a particular question with such completeness and from all points of view at the very moment when it was agitating the minds of the people as is the case with this book; in this respect it is a model that cannot be surpassed, and shows us the prophet at work in the fulness of his strength. How on that day he took by surprise the intoxicated spirits, annihilated their aims and hopes, and reestablished truths which accord with the Divine will,—of this he gives the most vivid picture in two sections, of the same structure and extent, and each consisting of four strophes, ch. xxviii. and ch. xxix. 1—xxx. 7, in order that in a third section of five strophes, xxx. 8—xxxii. 8, he may add whatever else is needful to be said at this time; and a final single strophe, xxxii. 9-20, proceeding from the true Divine oracle concerning the luxurious women, supplies the last word.

The most noteworthy feature of this great oration, with the high tension of its tone and execution, is the wise distinction everywhere made between the various classes of the opponents against whom the oration is directed. The preference for Egypt and the hope that was based on this country was in the air in the kingdom of Yuda, and this preference was the more generally fascinating and deceptive inasmuch as the disadvantages of Ahaz's Assyrian proclivities were then being painfully felt. The mass of the people also, and even the excellent king Hizqia, had been plainly enough brought over to this side, partly of their own accord and partly by that powerful faction which was openly opposed to our prophet: and Yesaya with a few more intimate friends stood probably quite



alone on the other side. His public opposition was, therefore, all the more difficult. But in this most difficult situation he chose the right word in a masterly manner. He knew well that the body of the people erred in this as in most instances rather from weakness and fear of the world than intentionally, and that only individual, defiantly rash magnates had so miserably gone astray in their aims and calculations. Accordingly, he varies with great prudence and firm discrimination the tone and manner of his discourse, according as he wishes to speak simply against and concerning the leaders of the affairs of the nation, or to the people themselves and concerning themselves. As in the first case the words of God cannot come from his mouth with a sufficiently crushing force, in the second, they are as full of gentle but serious admonition and overflowing with hope and consolation; whilst he never forgets the idea of the whole nation, which is elevated beyond all the individual members of the community of the true God. Not until the true Oracle of God has thus cast its light upon all sides, does it find repose. It is impossible to understand this long oration, which is the highest model of its kind, with regard to its agitation or even its long sections, unless all these points are carefully considered.

This book was manifestly circulated immediately in a separate form during that time of depression, and, as far as we can see, was always preserved in a separate form, without even a heading. Nor was a heading needed in the case of a book the origin of which from Yesaya any reader in those days could discern plainly enough in every word.—Whether the short piece ch. xx., was written at the same time in conjunction with our book, will be considered below.

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1. THE DRUNKENNESS AND PERVERSITY OF THE LEADERS OF  
THE NATION. Ch. xxviii.

That he may combat the drunken, irrational prophets and



their followers, Yesaya does not at once commence with them and their folly: he begins with a matter of apparently more distant interest, although it was of importance at that time and would be gladly listened to. With captivating and eloquent words he touches upon the mad frivolity of the magnates of Samaria, who were throwing themselves into all kinds of giddy pleasures although their country was just advancing headlong to manifest destruction, vv. 1-6. The people of Jerusalem are certain to listen willingly to a charge against Samaria: but they have hardly begun to attend to Yesaya's discourse, when he suddenly turns the severe censure against themselves, especially against the false prophets and priests and against other leaders of the people who are equally irrational, and who further (which is the worst crime of all!) ridicule the voice of truth—who, however, as the just punishment for this sin against the Holy Spirit, will soon themselves be terribly mocked and put to confusion by Him whom they now deride, by Yahvé, vv. 7-13. Having thus suddenly reached the heart of the matter, with a rapid climax surprising and overwhelming with the fire of prophetic zeal in a moment all enemies, he then prepares calmly to combat his opponents, although his opposition soon resumes its former fire: he confronts their false pretences and undertakings with the truth with regard to their future, vv. 14-21. The discourse, which has been of this stormy character through the second and even the third strophes, descends finally to gentler language, for the purpose of teaching the already vanquished opponents who are the friends of that immoderation which will not receive instruction from the prophet, that there must be moderation in all things, the form of the language being that of the calm, sententious proverb, vv. 22-29. Therefore four strophes of nearly equal length, the introductory one only being somewhat shorter and seeming at the end to be abruptly broken off.

## XXVIII.

## 1.

- 1 O proud crown of the drunkards of Ephráim,  
 and faded flowers of his glorious adornment, | which  
 is upon the head of the fat valley, of those stunned  
 with wine ! || behold the Lord hath a mighty and  
 powerful one, | as a tempest of hail and destroying  
 storm, as a tempest of mightily overflowing waters :  
 he casteth them to the earth by force ! || With the  
 feet it will be trodden down | the proud crown of  
 the drunkards of Ephráim, || and the fading flower  
 of his glorious adornment which is upon the head  
 of the fat hill | becometh as an early fig before the  
 summer, which one seeth, scarcely is it in his hand,  
 5 swalloweth. || —On that day will Yahvé of Hosts  
 be for an adorning crown and for a glorious wreath |  
 to the remnant of his people, || both for a spirit of  
 judgment to those who sit on the judgment-seat,  
 and for might to those who drive back war to the  
 gate.||

## 2.

- But these also—in wine they reel and in mead  
 they stagger, | the priest and the prophet reeled  
 in mead are overcome of wine, staggered from  
 mead reeled in the oracle tottered in the decision ! ||  
 yea all tables are full of filthy vomit | so that  
 there is no more room . . . ! ||—“ Whom  
 teacheth he wisdom, and to whom declareth he  
 revelation ? them that are weaned from the milk,  
 10 taken from the breast ? || that rule on rule rule  
 on rule, rod on rod rod on rod, | now here now

there!" || . . . . Yea with stammering words  
 and with another tongue | will he speak to this  
 people : || he who said unto them "this is the  
 place of rest: give rest to the weary! and this is  
 the refreshment!" | but they would not hear: ||  
 therefore Yahvé's word will be to them rule on  
 rule rule on rule, rod on rod rod on rod, now  
 here now there, | in order that they may go and  
 stumble backwards and break their limbs, and  
 ensnare and take themselves! ||

## 3.

Therefore hear Yahvé's word, ye men of  
 scorning, | rulers of this people which is in Jeru-  
 15 salem : || because ye think : "we formed a covenant  
 with death, and with hell we made an oracle; | the  
 overflowing scourge when it cometh up will not  
 reach us, because we made a lie our refuge and in  
 deceit hide ourselves:" || therefore saith the Lord  
 Yahvé thus: behold I have founded in Ssion a  
 stone, | a tried precious corner-stone of firmest  
 foundation: whoever believeth will not flee! || and  
 I make judgment as a rule and righteousness as a  
 balance, | so that the hail teareth away the refuge  
 of a lie, the covert of deceit the waters overflow, ||  
 and your covenant with death will be blotted out,  
 and your oracle with hell standeth not : | the  
 overflowing scourge when it cometh up, then ye  
 will serve it for crushing;|| as often as it cometh up  
 it will seize you, | for every morning it will come up,  
 by day and by night, | so that it is pure terror to

20 receive revelation. || — For “too short is the bed to stretch oneself, | and the covering too narrow when one will compose oneself !” || because as on the mount Perassim Yahvé will arise, as in the valley at Gibeon tremble, | to execute his work—his strange work, and to perform his occupation—his unheard-of occupation ! ||

## 4.

So therefore make no scorers, lest your bands become fast ! | for an end and decision have I heard from the Lord Yahvé of Hosts concerning the whole earth. || Observe and hear my voice, | attend and hear my words : ||

Is then the ploughman always ploughing that he may sow, | looseneth and harroweth his ground ? ||  
 25 when he hath levelled his surface, doth he not then scatter dill or sow cummin, | and setteth wheat upon the best land and barley upon the rough and spelt upon its borders ? || Thus instructeth him to judgment, his God teacheth him. ||

Surely with a sledge dill is not threshed, neither is a cartwheel drawn over cummin, | but with the staff dill is beaten and cummin with the stick. || Corn is threshed : | yet not for ever doth one thresh it and drive on his cart's axle and his horses, he doth not thresh it away. || — This also is uttered by Yahvé of Hosts ; | wonderful counsel hath he, great wisdom.

1. Samaria, the glorious ornament, or the proud royal residence, the honour and crown of Ephraïm, is situated upon a

mountain, which in the physical sense also rises like a pretty wreath over a fat, fruitful valley, Amos iv. 1; Mic. i. 6; 1 Kings xvi. 24; yet inasmuch as drunken people sit at table with wreaths on their heads, and the magnates of Ephraim are always as it were drunk (comp. ix. 8), there is from the commencement mixed with this figure the related and still more expressive one of the proud crown upon the head of the Ephraimite as he is stunned\* with wine, and both figures are carried on together from the commencement to the close, vv. 3, 4, accurately and beautifully, only in such a way that the figure of drunkenness, which is here the more important, takes the precedence. The wreath upon the head of the drunkard swings to and fro with its wearer, and may easily be cast into the dust; the flowers of the splendid wreath upon the head of the fat valley are already faded, ready to fall off: in both forms of it the wreath may, therefore, be easily torn off, and Yahvé has actually in readiness a mighty one (the Assyrian), who, approaching like a destructive hailstorm, or like a tempest of overwhelming rain-deluge hurled upon the earth by Yahvé, with a mighty hand tears off and tears down both wreaths at the same time by the conquest of Samaria, and who especially swallows down the attractive royal city like an early-fig which one has been fortunate enough to meet with (Hos. ix. 10; Mic. vii. 1 sq.; Mark xi. 13, 14). But the day when that will take place is (as is added, vv. 5, 6, in order to at once say all that is necessary here) nevertheless not a day of pure calamity: it is intended to be, according to the divine mind and aim, at the same time the commencement of that better age when Yahvé alone will be to the regenerated of his nation for a genuine ornament and for a royal adornment, to him who sits upon the seat of judgment for a spirit (not of wrong, as is at present the case in Samaria, but) of right, and to the noble warriors, who repulse the attacks of the enemy even into his

\* Compare οἶνοπλήξ and *mero saucius*.—Tr.



own city and his own gate, for a true strength, when all, therefore, however various their callings and occupations, will be impelled towards the same good end by the same Yahvé.

2. But the magnates here in Jerusalem also are as drunken and giddy as any of those in Samaria, especially is this the case with those who ought to be the most sober and temperate, priests and prophets tope and tumble in the midst of their prophesying, their judicial decisions; one has only to enter their assemblies, and, behold, what revelries and abominations beyond all limits! ver. 8, comp. v. 8.—But with the last words, ver. 8, one hears (with such graphic life does Yesaya here reproduce what then actually occurred), the verse and the entire oration suddenly interrupted: entirely different voices with equal abruptness are heard, vv. 9, 10. Scarcely a genuine prophet can approach them to explain the truth but they scoff at him and the divine word in the most shameful manner, asking him whether they are then such children (and wholly uninstructed people) that he should propose to teach them oracles, when they are grown and unusually wise men and highly enlightened prophets, ridiculing by mimicry his strong and surprising oration with its numerous repetitions of certain offensive words, ver. 7, while as drunken people they are only able to speak as stammerers in half-words, and thus giving him to understand what a miserable, insignificant schoolmaster, who stammers owing to his undue zeal, he is, that he is perpetually and everywhere finding nothing but occasions for censure and correction, is always endeavouring to smother them and deafen them with his *scale of justice* and his *measuring line* (i.e. with everlasting admonitions), never leaving them in peace, having somewhat to censure sometimes here sometimes there! (We must conceive the abrupt, intentionally short, reiterated, and almost childish words, ver. 10, as spoken in mimicry, with a mocking motion of the head, and in a childish, stammering, taunting tone, comp. lvii. 4). With such taunting mimicry they desire to confound and trouble the true prophet, and to

reject the word of truth and therewith their correcting God ; but the very opposite of this their godless intention must take place ! Did they really think that they were able to ridicule the prophet not simply as a man but the God who speaks from within him, inasmuch as they looked upon the former as an unduly zealous, stammering, dogmatic person ? But because with such derision they only wish to escape from him from whom they can never escape, least of all now when they are so thoughtlessly rejecting his plain truth, they will soon be compelled to hear in an entirely different manner the language which they wish not to hear : with stammering, confounding words, and in a new language which they have never heard before, Yahvé, whose mild clear words, which never demand too much, and whose admonitions to spare the poor they would not obey, will himself address them, returning them their mimic derision, that is, in the language of the thunder and of the terrible punishment which can no longer be put off, he will visit them, so that they who wished to confound him will themselves be cast down in their own confusion, and meet their destruction ! comp. viii. 15, and as a further elucidation the words that immediately follow, vv. 18-22.

3. With such presence of mind and such overwhelming energy is Yesaya able with the most telling precision to turn against themselves the thoughts and words with which they intended to deride him (or rather, when we consider the real fact, the God within him). But after he has thus uttered at the right moment the strongest thing that he could say, he is equally able to speak with calmness : and it is marvellous to observe with what a degree of self-possession he now directs his words to them in the next strophe : therefore hear ye further, and more calmly what Yahvé now saith, ye mockers and magnates of the land who are easily overcome by him whom ye desire to deride ! I will lay bare before your eyes your inmost thoughts which ye desire to conceal, and I will declare what Yahvé saith with regard to them. Ye imagine

that ye have secured yourselves by lying and deceit (*e. g.*, by an alliance with Egypt (xxix. 15 sq.) which is kept hidden from Yahvé and the light, concluded in secret, and still kept from the public) against any future national calamity, against the advancing scourge of the divine chastisements which will overwhelm the land (viii. 7, 8; Job ix. 23); nay, more, ye imagine that, in view of the approaching times of mortal danger, which are feared even by you, ye have concluded a covenant with death and hell that they are not to lay hold upon you, confiding in certain black arts and oracular formulas from which ye look for this magic power to conjure danger and death in your favour, ver. 15 (comp. viii. 19 although the prophets here intended, who imagined that they could conjure death by their oracles and sacrifices, might be false prophets of Yahvé himself): but Yahvé has long ago established another defence, another sure stone of refuge, namely, the Sanctuary in Ssion, the long tested, precious foundation-stone of surest foundation, and faith in the true God who is worshipped therein; so that it may also be briefly said, *whoever* holdeth fast (to this Eternal, *believeth*, has faith), *he will not flee* when threatened by calamity, but in the midst of danger find a firm position and an indestructible fortress, ver. 16, comp. xxix. 1-8; viii. 14; xiv. 32; with regard, however, to the precise form the future will assume, what the false prophets and their followers imagine they have gained will be of no avail, but God will take justice and righteousness alone as the rule and scale of all human actions, and the irresistible punishment mentioned before in connexion with Samaria, ver. 2, will carry away your refuge, wipe out your prophetically hallowed covenant with death, so that ye will rather serve for trampling upon to the scourge ye fear (the Assyrian, *e. g.*), vv. 17, 18. Indeed, as often as the divine chastisement in the time of the great decision cometh up (and it will come up in incessant blows), it will seize and smite you (Ps. xlix. 16), so that then it will no more occur to you to deride the oracle which will come with

every blow (for the divine truth will then be the more perceptible and urgent with every successive blow, Rev. xiv. 6); for, as is said in the proverb of the bed and the coverlet, people will then feel themselves too confined and too cold, finding rest nowhere (ver. 12), because, in one word, the rising of Yahvé will be as terrible as at any time in the ancient days when he arose to punish the Kanáanites—for the purpose of completing a work such as men have never before seen or experienced! xxix. 14.—The great ancient days at Perassim and Gibeon are not probably those of 2 Sam. v. 20, 25, but rather such as are mentioned Josh. x. 20 sq., because the prophets of this period did not yet borrow such examples from the history of David. The description, ver. 19, is further, on too great a scale to allow the supposition that the Assyrians are alone intended.

4. And yet once more, and this time if possible with greater calmness, Yesaya with all earnestness admonishes them not to continue their derision, lest the bands of evil in which they were already snared become still faster and quite indissoluble; indeed, he has clearly heard from Yahvé, that nothing less than destruction and decision, therefore the destruction of all sinners in pursuance of a judicial and unalterable divine decision, awaits the whole earth from Yahvé (comp. x. 22, 23); there can then be no jesting and mockery! May they who formerly despised his teaching listen now to it! ver. 23; he is about quite calmly to place before them by way of conclusion a few proverbs taken from simple country life, leaving it to the superior wisdom of the wise magnates of the capital to discover their application to themselves. If one attends only to the common labours of the husbandman in their two main aspects, sowing and reaping, (hence the two short strophes, vv. 24-26; 27-29), one soon observes that he does nothing without regard to its proper manner and measure; he does not keep on ploughing and harrowing incessantly that he may sow on some indefinite future day, he sows also at the proper time, and sows



everything in the right place, on the land that is in each case suitable, *e.g.*, wheat on the best land, barley on the poorer and rougher land, spelt somewhere near this, on a piece between the barley and the wheat land; he proceeds with his harvest with equal consideration, not threshing, *e.g.*, the small and finer seeds, dill, cummin, in the same rough manner as he does the larger, the proper corn, but the former he beats out more carefully with a staff (xxvii. 12), while he draws over the latter only in the rougher manner the threshing sledge with wheels and horses; however, he does not drag this over them for ever, because he would then only grind to pieces and lose everything. All this is done by the simple husbandman, instructed by God to observe order and propriety! But ye magnates and philosophers, who imagine yourselves to be far more than a husbandman, will ye observe no moderation and propriety? will ye go on in your wild, irrational life? Assuredly it is the one thing needful and the only proper course in all hidden and difficult matters to attend to God and to his action, which is manifested in history, and to follow in all things his guidance. But Yesaya leaves them to make this application to themselves, that he may not again fall into the language of severity; and, ver. 29, closes quite calmly with the observation, that this instruction also comes from him who has infinite wisdom and imparts it to the man who looks to him.

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How the construction of the construct cases, ver. 1 *b* and ver. 4, which is in many ways involved, is to be explained, appears from § 287 *b* and § 289 *a*. The difference between *זֵיץ* ver. 1, and *צִינָה* ver. 4, is with respect to the general sense of the passage not great, but it should not, acc. § 176 *a*, be overlooked, and may be indicated in the translation.\* In any case, it is not necessary to alter the reading; but if in ver. 2 the alteration *וְהִנִּיחַ* is made the gain in respect of meaning and connexion is immense, comp. § 346 *b*.

\* In the German, *Gebülde* and *Blume*.—Tr.



The words, vv. 6, 7, have the greatest similarity, with respect to the opening of the strophe, their tone, and their entire meaning, to iv. 2: but the particular allusion to the good *judge*, or rather king, who was then ruling, ver. 6 *a*, and to the army of brave defenders of their country, ver. 6 *b*, as it was then to be wished that they might prove, flows from the new circumstances of the time, and recurs quite similarly below, towards the end of the long oration, xxxii. 1 sq., with Messianic elevation. With reference to the phrase *to drive back the war*, i.e., the enemy, *to the gate*, comp. Ps. cxxvii. 5; Nah. iii. 13.

רָאָה ver. 7, and הָוִיָּה ver. 15, to which קָוִיָּה corresponds ver. 18, receive further explanation §. 156 *e*.—In ver. 8 it must not be overlooked that the line and prophet's words themselves are intentionally cut short.

The meaning of the two words, קָוִי and קֶוֶן, which are here placed together manifestly on account of the similarity of their sound, vv. 10, 13, would be determined with more difficulty had not Yesaya himself in the course of his oration, and especially ver. 17, alluded to them and come back to them almost verbally. The meaning of קֶוֶן as a *line* appears clearly from ver. 17: and קָוִי, like Arab. *sûwatun* (or *sûwah*), *suwan* (or *suwâ*) Hamâsa, p. 156, ver. 6, may denote something that is *placed upright*, or what stands up, as we have already met with it in the meaning of a *post*, or *pale*, Hosea v. 11, comp. iv. 12 (see Vol. I. p. 261); for קָוִיָּה *to command* is also properly *to set up*, *to erect*, and the Arab. *swb* (as radical) is related to it. It could therefore as a *straight piece of wood*, a *rule*, also signify the beam of a scale, like *κάνων*, but was without doubt an antiquated word which was very little used in Jerusalem, and is therefore itself explained, ver. 17, by the usual word for *scale*. Taken in this sense, the word קֶוֶן as a *string* or *measuring line* bore very much the same meaning, both ideas really interchanging, ver. 17 and 2 Kings xxi. 13; and in the above translation they are represented by the words *rule* and *rod* [Germ. *richte* and *ruthe*] only that the assonance may appear. If both words thus express

the idea that the prophet seems to these people to be only like a schoolmaster who is incessantly dinning them with his rule and his rod, it is clearly intended that by this rattling combination of sounds they wish to mimic the language of Yesaya himself, who had just before, ver. 7, six times repeated words of a similar sound פָּקֹדֵי שָׁגֵר הָעַר, becoming, however, in the mouth of these drunken people only half-intelligible, stammered sounds, to which allusion is made immediately, vv. 11 sq., and at the end of the great oration, xxxii. 4, and again intentionally in the latter place, in order to refer the hearer at the end once more to the beginning. These facts determine clearly enough the signification of the two words and of the whole passage; and if the words of God, vv. 11, 13, are meant to convey only a reciprocated taunt, there is therein no allusion whatever to a foreign human language, *e.g.*, that of the Assyrians, or to the approach of these people, and the passage referring to them, xxxiii. 19, can with the less reason be produced here to show this, inasmuch as the piece, ch. xxxiii. does not belong to our book or originate from Yesaya. The לַעֲנֵי שָׁהָ are also naturally in conformity with ordinary usage simply *stammering sounds*, not people of a stammering (barbarian) speech, as if it came from a לַעֲנֵי; such an one is elsewhere called לוֹעִי; see on xxxiii. 19; and the translation, 1 Cor. xiv. 21, is taken quite loosely from the LXX.\*

\* The author adds the following note on this passage in the second edition of his work, *Die drei ersten Evangelien und die Apostelgeschichte* (Göttingen, 1872), Vol. II. p. 66:—"What I have said in my Commentary on the Prophets on this passage (Isa. xxviii. 11 sq.) is on the whole correct: yet it is possible that Yesaya referred ultimately when he spoke of the stammering words and the strange language with which God was about to speak to the people, to the Assyrians and their incessant, terrible commands and demands in a strange tongue, and that the piece in which he explained this more fully has not come down to us. The reason for supposing that the Assyrians are also intended here as an instrument in Yahvé's hand (as Yesaya says elsewhere), is that Yesaya must have had something definite in his mind when he spoke of the means by which Yahvé would as it were himself deride and punish those who were deriding him in his prophet: this could not be anything else than the Assyrians. He refers, therefore, here ch. xxviii. 11 sq., in a distant way to them; but, in accordance with his custom, he then without doubt explained

The *st. constr.*, ver. 16 *b*, extends even further than that in vv. 1, 4, through as many as five words; on מוֹפֶד מוֹפֶד see §. 313 *c*. It is probable that ver. 17 שָׁקֵר acc. ver. 15, has fallen out after סִתֵּר, the meaning requiring its suppletion.—The language of the portion vv. 16-18 is on another account (see Vol. I. p. 21) remarkable, inasmuch as it shows very vividly how inseparably in the minds of the ancients the *Oracle* (and sacrifice) was connected with every important national undertaking, *e.g.*, the conclusion of an alliance, so much so that both ideas here interchange. This, however, was the case in all religions, and is mentioned here in this way only as the feeling of those thoughtless people.

There is no doubt but that the words ver. 20 embody an ancient proverb: but vv. 24-29 Yesaya shows how well he knows how to make use of proverbial and didactic poetry where he deems it in place; in this respect he prepares for the transition to Christ and the Gospels.

The word שׂוֹרֶה, ver. 25, appears to be an agricultural term, derived from שָׂר, the first man, prince, (Germ. *fürst.*), נֶסֶמֶן is probably the rougher, coarser, less productive, land, being *part. Nif.* from סָמַן, acc. §. 51 *c* = סָמַר prickly, bristly, rough; at least there is at present no better explanation. It is necessary ver. 28 to read יִירָשׁ instead of יִירֶק.

2. *The Truth with regard to the Future presented as an Enigma and as actual Fact.*

Ch. xxix. 1—xxx. 7.

How totally unlike its commencement the end of the previous piece became! It seems as if those hearers who at first rose in drunken defiance and derision against the word of the prophet, had now become by the irresistible power and truth of

his reference in a special piece, which has now been lost. But that we have then to understand the words לַעֲגִי שִׁפְהָ as meaning *stammering speakers* from לַעֲגִי, is not correct, as ver. 13 shows.

his word growingly calmer and more serious, and as if they were already listening in silence and sober attention to that word of God upon which at first they could not heap sufficient scorn. But scarcely have they been brought thus far, when the prophet after a brief pause commences again from an entirely different point of view, although he is at the same time only completing all that he had said before: he comes now to present his own prophetic anticipation and therein the pure divine truth with regard to the future. But at once the whole of his conceptions with regard to the true future and its necessary unfolding are gathered up and concentrated in a single compressed figure and a short description, while the truth, upon which these conceptions are based, is expressed in a single new name, which contains everything as it were in a wonderful germ, and from which therefore everything now proceeds. This is the name *Ariel*, i.e., *Lion of God*, the lion that is strong and valorous by God's help. If Ssion (for the prophet really intends Ssion by this new name) is this Lion, as Yesaya supposes it to be in his prophetic anticipation, there lies in the mysterious depths of this higher, divine name the truth of the city's entire future. It may, on the one hand, be attacked and greatly distressed by powerful and destructive enemies (the Assyrians), and as a fact will very soon, within one or two years (xxix. 1, 17; xxxii. 10) be closely besieged; but, on the other hand, the more threatening the danger the more will it approve itself the invincible Lion of God, the more triumphantly and quickly will it be rescued by Yahvé (as, for instance, all Israel was once rescued by Yahvé's succouring presence in Egypt). Yesaya wishes at the opening of his long oration to excite in the highest degree the attention of his hearers with regard to the new view of the true solution of the problem of the future, and also by the way once more to place in a clear light the folly of the false prophets, beyond whose reach this truth lies. He accordingly prefaces his oration with his prophetic view of the future, clothing it in an enigmatical



form, as a strange narrative of a divine miracle, proposing to the false prophets as it were an enigma, to see if they understood the strange utterance with regard to this marvellous history of Ariel and his divine power and deliverance — of which they have no conception, neither, considering their past habits, can have, and at which they must be overwhelmed with helpless amazement! And not until in the first strophe, xxix. 1-8, the enigmatical oracle has been uttered, and in the second, xxix. 9-14, the stupid amazement of the false prophets which it causes has been properly chastised, does the prophet begin to explain more fully this enigma, as if it were now time to supply the simple interpretation of it with the greater calmness and completeness. But this interpretation consists precisely in the censure of the obstinacy and the false confidence of those who are now without faith in Ssion and Yahvé and are turning secretly to Egypt for help, while they ought to find wisdom, faithfulness and confidence in Yahvé, who alone has the will and the power to promote the weal of Ssion, and who certainly will do it in quite another way than these men imagine. But scarcely has the prophet begun in this way to speak concerning the true authors of the evil proposal, when his heart compels him in the third strophe, vv. 15-24, to turn especially to the mass of the nation, who are quite innocent of the proposal, with words of consolation, so that the severest utterance of censure does not fall upon those whom it primarily concerns before the fourth strophe, xxx. 1-7. Thus the arrangement of this piece, notwithstanding the great dissimilarity of its matter, is like that of the previous one, both with regard to the number of the strophes and its entire development. Like the former, it begins in the first strophe with something which appears quite foreign, but only in order that in the second strophe it may with the more overwhelming force strike those against whom it is aimed, and then in the last two fully exhaust the thought.



## 1.

## XXIX.

- 1 O God's-lioness God's-lioness, city where David encamped ! | add year to year, let the feasts revolve, || then will I make it strait for God's-lioness, so that she becometh sighs and sighing : | —but then will she be to me as God's-lioness. || —For I encamp as a ring around thee, | and enclose around thee a rampart and set up against thee bulwarks : || then thou wilt speak humbly from the ground, and from the dust thy words whisper, | as of a ghost from the ground will thy voice be, and from the
- 5 dust thy words chirp. || Yet like fine dust shall be the throng of thine enemies, and like flying chaff the throng of the mighty-ones ; | and it will come to pass on a sudden suddenly || —From Yahvé of Hosts shall she be visited with crashing and thunder and great noise, | storm and tempest and flame of devouring fire ; || and as a dream a night-vision will be the throng of all the Heathen who contend against God's-lioness. || And all they who fight against her and her fortress and who distress her— | well, as when he who is hungry dreameth that he eateth, and awaketh and empty is his stomach, | and as when he who is thirsty dreameth that he drinketh, and awaketh and seeth himself languishing and his soul longing, | thus will be the throng of all the Heathen who contend against Mount Ssion. ||

## 2.

Be astounded and astonished ! be blinded and

10 blind ! | they are drunken but without wine,  
 stunned but without mead ! || for Yahvé hath  
 poured a spirit of intoxication upon you, and  
 closed your eyes\* and covered your seeing heads, ||  
 so that the prophecy concerning everything be-  
 came like the words of the sealed book, which men  
 give to the book-scholar saying “pray read this” ! |  
 but he saith “I cannot, because it is sealed ;” ||  
 or as when a book is given to one who doth not  
 understand written characters, saying “pray read  
 this” | and he saith “I know nothing of books” ! ||  
 —So then the Lord hath said : Because this nation  
 approached with its mouth and with its lips  
 honouring me, but its heart strayeth far from me, |  
 so that their fear towards me became a command-  
 ment of men got by heart : || therefore will I  
 further deal marvellously with this people, mar-  
 vellously and a marvel, | so that the wisdom of its  
 wise men perisheth, and the intelligence of its  
 intelligent men concealeth itself.

## 3.

15 O they who desire to hide deep from Yahvé coun-  
 sel, that their deeds may be in darkness, | and say  
 “who seeth us and who knoweth us ?” || How  
 perverse are ye ! or as the clay is the framer to be  
 esteemed, | that a work should say to its master  
 “he hath not made me,” and a thing framed say of  
 its framer “he understandeth it not” ! || —Yea a  
 very little while longer—and Lebanon is turned

\* *The Prophets.*

into a fruit-field | and the fruit-field will be deemed the forest, || and there will hear on that day the deaf the words of a book, | and out of obscurity and darkness the eyes of the blind will see, || and sufferers have greater joy in Yahvé, | and helpless  
 20 people exult in the Holy One of Israel. || For the violent one vanisheth and the scorner ceaseth, | and all that wake for evil are cut off, || who condemn men for a word, for him that reproveth in the market-place lay snares | and by inanity overthrow the just. || —Therefore thus saith Yahvé unto the House of Yaqob, he that redeemed Abraham: | thenceforth Yaqob will not any more blush, and thenceforth his countenance no more wax pale: || but when he seeth his children as the work of my hands in his midst, people will hallow my name, | hallow the Holy One of Yaqob and profoundly fear Israel's God ; || and the erring in spirit know understanding, | and the hardened learn education. ||

## 4.

## XXX.

1 O rebellious sons, saith Yahvé, to execute a counsel and not from me, and to weave a web without my spirit, | in order to heap sin upon sin! || they who go down to Egypt, without having enquired of my mouth, | to fortify themselves in Pharaoh's fortress, and to flee into Egypt's shadow! || So Pharaoh's fortress will become your shame, | and the flight into Egypt's shadow your confusion. || Though his princes are in Tanis, | and

though his messengers reach unto Hanés: || every-  
 one blusheth at people who help him not, | who  
 are not there for help nor for profit, but for shame  
 and also for reproach. || —\*Through a land of  
 distress and straitness, whence lioness and lion,  
 adder and flying dragon, | they carry upon the  
 shoulders of young asses their wealth and upon the  
 humps of camels their treasures | —to people who  
 do not profit! || But Egypt helpeth idly and  
 vainly: || therefore I call this *Boastful* [Rahab]  
 that is *Slothful*! ||

1. vv. 1-8. The strange and wonderful name must from the first supply some indication of its meaning, and accordingly Ariel is at once, ver. 1, designated as the place, in fact, more definitely, as *the* city, where David once encamped during his wars; but it is not until the end, ver. 8, that the artistic structure of this strophe suffers the real name to appear, when it is a surprise to the hearer, though it has been gradually prepared for. And the enigma of the entire historical marvel is similarly presented at first in the most pointed form, vv. 1, 2, to be gradually hinted at and described with increasing particularity, vv. 3-5, vv. 6-8. At the commencement, therefore, with great brevity: let another year pass, the feasts again revolve, then will I so straiten the *Lioness of God* that she will become nothing but grief without preserving any of the characteristics of a Lioness of God; but it is then precisely that she will become to me the true Lioness of God, approve herself as one who is invincible through me. For, it is further said, vv. 3-5, that in the Assyrians, who will enclose and straiten her after the best method of besieging, it is in reality Yahvé himself who comes to inflict punishment, as if he

\* *Oracle of the Beasts of the South*; comp. Vol. I. p. 89.

besieged her, which she must then discover in the fact that she will be brought to extremities, and is scarcely able with ghostly, hollow voice (viii. 18) to whimper, sunk in the profoundest grief; yet suddenly (when it is to be hoped that she will then at least have been converted) all her enemies will be scattered like dust. For Yahvé himself, vv. 6-8, will visit her in a storm, as he once visited Israel in Egypt, for instance, and so dash to pieces the barbarians who desire to destroy the true sanctuary, were they never so many, that they vanish like the forms of a dream (which alarm but do not injure), Ps. lxxiii. 20, while their greed to destroy Ssion, very unlike the case of xxviii. 4, will be deceived like that of a man who has appeased his appetite merely in a dream. Comp. the way in which this is explained below, xxx. 27-33; xxxi. 4-9.

2. Vv. 9-14. The prophet sees his former opponents astonished, amazed and confounded at his strange oration. But with great presence of mind and remarkable force he immediately turns their astonishment against themselves and sees in it a new proof of their folly, which he had before been compelled to charge them with, ch. xxviii. Yes, be amazed and blind as much as you like! Here men are intoxicated and stupefied by quite another than the ordinary process, that of wine! ver. 9, with reference to xxviii. 7. Yahvé himself has blinded you with your eyes open, and, instead of the true prophetic spirit, poured upon you a spirit of intoxication, so that ye cannot now understand a genuine oracle concerning any matter whatsoever (as that is which I have just delivered to you), as if prophecy concerning any matter had become to you already like the contents of a sealed book, which although a man understands writing he cannot read (Rev. v. 1 sq.), or as if ye were even like those who are unable to read any book (even an open one), vv. 10-12, comp. xix. 14. But just because the entire nation of the present time, misled by such prophets, even when it appears, as now, before Yahvé, and comes to his sanctuary with sacrifices (i. 12), and professes to



honour him, really in its inmost heart wanders far from him, and their fear of him, of which they make a display, is not an impulse of the heart and a voluntary and joyous resolve, but merely an acquired commandment of men, a following of the laws and customs which have once for all been prescribed by priests and prophets;—precisely on this account, will Yahvé deal once more with this people in a very marvellous manner, as he did in ancient times, that is, in some such manner as is described, vv. 1-8, so that the wisdom of the nation's wise men, which is unable to understand true spiritual marvels of this kind, must shamefully perish.

3. If the naked fact, however, instead of the enigma must be declared, it is especially, as follows at once from what has just been said, the folly of the originators of the Egyptian proposal which deserves to be severely blamed, their folly in the present instance consisting in the belief that they are able to plan and execute a matter (*e.g.*, the alliance with Egypt) in secret without Yahvé's knowledge: which is so perverse, inasmuch as the creature cannot excel the Creator in point of power and knowledge, vv. 15, 16.—But since such folly really flows from pusillanimity and a certain suspicion regarding Yahvé's power, a failing in which unhappily the misled masses of the people share, the discourse turns off to them, and declares, as if animated by profound compassion, that Yahvé, on the contrary, will even within a short time change the entire condition of the world (ver. 17, comp. xxxii. 15, 16, in a tropical sense, *forest*, desert = Lebanon, Ps. cxxxii. 6; Hag. i. 8), and by a great action, which will make even the deaf hear and the blind see (and put an end to the present folly, ver. 9), deliver the helpless sufferers, since it is surely impossible that the violent one, *i.e.*, the tyrant, the Assyrian, ver. 5, or the insolent mocker in Israel itself, xxviii. 14, and all the keen transgressors should continue, who, *e.g.*, condemn the true prophets and faithful monitors on account of a mere word, and prepare for them all kinds of fatal traps on frivolous grounds when they appear in

public, vv. 17-21; with ver. 21, comp. xxx. 10, 11; ver. 20 as xxxii. 10 b, 14.—Let, therefore, Israel in its present liability to despair comfort itself with the sure promise of the redeemer of Abraham, that its youngest tribal father, Yaqob himself, who though he now looks down upon it from his elevation in glory can feel only grief and shame, will then at the sight of his transfigured nation (*the work of my hands*, comp. xix. 25) no more blush; the experience of the great miraculous succour, xxviii. 21, and their own redemption, will forcibly impel all really to consider the Holy One holy and to fear him (viii. 12, 13), will therefore promote the spiritual regeneration, and people of an erring, hardened spirit also, as those described, vv. 9-12, 18, and especially xxviii. 7, will then receive sound doctrine, to which they are now insensible, vv. 22-24.

4. But, finally, it is time to speak quite openly of those who boasted to the common people that they were the true *statesmen*, xxx. 1-7. That the counsel which they execute, the *web* which they *weave*, will not succeed, that Egypt will not help them, follows (1) precisely from the fact that the plan is conceived against Yahvé; therefore the alliance with Egypt will bring them nothing but disgrace, ver. 3; if Egypt is really as great and powerful as is said, although it embraces the north (where the royal residence was in Tanis) and the centre of the territory of the Nile, so that its messengers (the ambassadors of the kingdom with the royal commands, Nah. ii. 14) reach to Hanés ("Ανυσίς, Herod. ii. 137, now Ehnés): yet it brings to a man only shame to hope for help from such a land! vv. 4, 5.—But (2) it also lies in the nature of the vain Egyptians not to keep their promises, not to render assistance, so that one might call the kingdom, which gives itself the high name Ráhab, *i.e.* as translated into Hebrew, *Defiance, Violence*, (comp. the note on Ps. lxxxvii. 4, *Dichter des A. B. I. b*, p. 389) or, for the sake of the paronomasia, *Boastful*, rather by the name of *Shébeth*, *i.e.* *Sitting*, or staying still, *Stillness*, according to the common experience that the most haughty and

boastful people, when action and assistance are required, are the most cowardly and dilatory. What folly, therefore, to carry the most costly presents through the terrors of the wilderness to such people, vv. 6, 7! The paronomasia might also be rendered *Precipitancy*, that is, *Sitting-still*, or *Crocodile that is Stay-a-while*. It is clearly Yesaya's purpose to conduct the thread of the discourse in such a way that it shall conclude with a witty paronomasia, which may allow the severe seriousness of the entire transaction to be relieved at last by a ray of humour, and also serve to compress into a brief witty utterance, that can be easily remembered, the real gist of the whole matter as regards its immediate application to the present. It is also very suitable that the same piece whose first word is the enigmatical Ariel and its interpretation, should end with the directly opposite enigmatical Râhab and its explanation.

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That *Ariel*, xxix. 1, denotes the *fire-hearth* (altar) of God, cannot at most be made more than probable from the words with which Yesaya, xxxi. 9, closes a strophe; Ez. xliii. 15, 16, cannot be quoted for this interpretation, as will appear *in loco*: but a root אָרַח and אָרַח = *to burn*, is possible (see *History of Israel*, II. 206 (II. 291)). But here, vv. 1-8, it is manifestly the invincible, *i.e.* lion-like, character of this city to which prominence is given; and how natural the image of a lion was as applied to the Jerusalem of that time is explained, *History of Israel*, III. 250 (III. 341). But Yesaya unquestionably recurs to this image, xxxi. 4-9.

The word מִצָּד, xxix. 3, is certainly taken most correctly by the LXX., Vulg., Sym., Pesch., as denoting something like a rampart and mound, which is *closed*, *i.e.* carried round, the city; properly something thrown up, as *agger*, comp. Zech. viii. 8, elsewhere with a slight difference סִלְלָה Isa. xxxvii. 31; Jer. xxxiii. 4; different from these are the מִצְרוֹת, *i.e.*, proper bulwarks, towers constructed for a siege.

xxix. 7. The discourse would become unnecessarily languid

if *b* were closely connected with *a*. It is much better to begin a long new sentence with it, which is continued in ver. 8: this has also the recommendation that in that case the entire third and last main section of the oration vv. 6-8 will consist of only two similar long sentences, the first of which closes like ver. 2 with Ariel, the second with the corresponding word Ssion. It is true, this involves an alteration in the division of the verses.

xxix. 10. The LXX. already read the words אֵינֶנּוּ הַנְּבִיאִים, only misinterpreted them as they did so many others. But if they are to be considered genuine, they would have to be more closely connected, acc. §. 290 *d*, and translated your *prophet-eyes*, or rather, in consideration of the repeated אֵינֶנּוּ, *your eyes the prophetic ones*. But even then the sense would not be so simple as it clearly must be according to the second member, compared with vi. 9, 10; xxxii. 3; and the chief point is that it is not the prophets alone who can here be referred to, according to the general meaning of the entire discourse; for they are included, acc. xxviii. 7 sq., but are by no means alone intended, as also immediately appears v. 11 sq. The words must therefore be looked upon as a later addition, (see vol. I. p. 89), although, like the addition with a similar meaning and object ix. 14, it may have been found in the manuscript as early as Yéremyá's time.

On the other hand, care must be taken not to misunderstand the sublime words, xxix. 23, or to find in them anything superfluous; in the *History of Israel* I. 296 (I. 424) it was shown how truly they accord in thought and language with the primitive ideas of the Patriarchs, and particularly of the last of them Yaqob.

The sense of the difficult words xxx. 4, is not evident until it is observed that this פֶּן forms, acc. §. 362 *b*., a mere protasis and antithesis to ver. 5.

The three concluding words xxx. 7, רַחֵם הֵם שְׁבַת will remain obscure as long as it is not perceived that they are intended to



supply a short proverbial utterance, to be retained in the memory, or even to be written in great letters upon a public writing slab as a monument, as is here forthwith pre-supposed at the commencement of the next section, ver. 8. Accordingly כִּן must signify merely the *Germ. das ist, that is, or which is*; the כִּן therefore has here, as ver. 6 and elsewhere, the force of *it*, acc. §. 172 *b*, and the plural may be used here and ver. 6 because in the case of any country the people of it may be understood, but this does not affect the real force of the word here.

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3. *The Prophet's further Anticipations and Admonitions.*  
ch. xxx. 8—xxxii. 8.

At this point the prophet becomes silent : his opponents are also quite silent, although their silence may be due rather to the irresistible force of his words for the moment than to genuine conviction. Nor does Yesaya deceive himself in this respect. But as the Spirit of God had impelled him thus to appear in public and to speak as he had done, so now he was led by the same Spirit to feel that it was not well just then to speak further publicly, that he must withdraw into privacy leaving his words to gradually produce their full effect, not with a view of giving up the cause which he had defended, but to labour in it further at home by the means which were there at his command and accordant with the divine will. Thus the production of this entire book, together with similar efforts, was simply the natural continuation of his public labours in the arduous cause of the time, and by a very easy transition he subjoins in this *third* section all that he had further to say from his retirement, whether it was admonition or prophetic anticipation, threat or consolation, severe reproof or mild instruction, with the design of explaining and giving the highest meaning to the two-edged sharpness of his public oration. On this account the discourse which now opens, as a third great section



at the close of the entire book and as a supplement of the two preceding sections, is of greater length, becoming a highly important closing oration of five strophes. It commences slowly and softly, but early in the first strophe the real opponents are from general points of view severely enough censured; it soon turns in the second and third strophes to the mass of the nation, comforting them and holding forth with growing force and precision the consummation of the Messianic hope; but this is done only in order that from this elevation the real opponents may in the fourth strophe be once more pointed out and profound errors of their policy displayed, and the entire piece be closed in the fifth with the calmest and sweetest Messianic hope and doctrine.

It is in this section, which originated as a literary composition, that Yesaya for the first time speaks quite openly against Assyria xxx. 31-33; subsequently he does this the more frequently the greater their haughtiness becomes. Another indication that this third section, as from the first a written production, is later than the public orations of the previous sections may be seen in the words xxxi. 2, as will be shown below.

## 1.

## XXX.

- 8        Now go home write it upon a slab before them,  
           and note it in a book, | that it may be to a later  
           day for a witness for ever! || —For it is a stubborn  
           nation, apostate sons, | sons who will not hear  
 10    Yahvé's doctrine, || who said to the seers "ye shall  
           not see!" and to the presagers "ye shall not pre-  
           sage unto us straightforwardness! | speak unto us  
           flatteries, presage delusions; || get ye out of the  
           way, turn aside from the path, | make the Holy  
           One of Israel to rest before us!" || —Wherefore

thus saith the Holy One of Israel : Because ye  
 disdained this word, | but trusted in violence and  
 crooked ways and stayed yourselves thereon : ||  
 therefore this transgression will be to you as a  
 falling rent swelling out in a highbuilt wall | whose  
 breach cometh on a sudden suddenly, || and  
 breaking it as when an earthen pitcher is broken  
 shattered without pity | and there is not found in  
 its shivers a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or  
 to draw water from the fountain. || For thus saith  
 15 the Lord Yahvé the Holy One of Israel “in quiet  
 and rest shall ye be saved, in peace and in confi-  
 dence will be your strength!” | but ye would not ||  
 and said : “no, but upon *fleet-steeds* will we *fly*!”  
 therefore shall ye *flee* ; | “and upon *chargers* will  
 we ride !” therefore shall your pursuers *charge* ! ||  
 a thousand at the threat of one, at the threat of  
 five will ye flee, | till ye remain over as the pole  
 upon the top of the mountain, and as the standard  
 upon the hill. ||

## 2.

And therefore Yahvé delayeth to be gracious  
 unto you, and therefore he stirreth not to have  
 pity upon you : | for a God of justice is Yahvé ;  
 blessed are all who wait for him ! || —For O people  
 which dwellest in Ssion, in Jerusalem ! | weep  
 weep shalt thou not, pity pity will he have upon  
 thee as soon as thou callest, as soon as he heareth  
 20 it he hath already answered thee ; || but if the  
 Lord giveth you bread of distress and water of

affliction, | then will thy teacher no more hide himself, but thine eyes will continually see thy teacher, || and thine ears will hear words behind thee saying | “there is the way, walk ye in it!” when ye turn to the right and when ye turn to the left; || then thou defilest the covering of thy silver graven-images and the fine-work of thy golden molten-image, | thou wilt spurn them as a loathsome thing, saying to it “hence”! || Then giveth he rain for thy seed with which thou sowest the ground, and the bread of the produce of the ground—it is nourishing and fat; | thy herd will feed on that day in a wide pasture, || and the oxen and young asses which work the ground eat salted mixed-fodder | which has been winnowed with the fan and shovel; || and upon every high mountain and upon every lofty hill are streams flowing with water, | —on the day of the great battle, when towers fall. || Then will the pale moonlight be as the glow light, and the glow-light is seven-fold as the light of seven days | —on the day when Yahvé bindeth up the wound of his people, and healeth the hurt of its blow. ||

## 3.

Behold Yahvé’s name cometh from afar, burning with anger and with violent uprising, | his lips full of wrath, and his tongue like devouring fire, || while his breath is like an overflowing torrent which reacheth unto the neck to toss heathen with the fan of delusion, | and a misleading bridle is

upon the cheeks of the nations. || —The song will be to you as in the night of the solemnisation of the feast, | and joy of heart as when one journeyeth to the pipe towards Yahvé's mount unto the rock of  
 30 Israel ; || and Yahvé causeth his grand thunder to peal, and showeth the lighting-down of his arm | in the heat of his anger and flame of devouring fire, a crashing and tempest and hailstones. || Yea at the thunder of Yahvé Assur will crash down, | from the staff wherewith he smiteth it; || and whenever there passeth over the rod of doom which Yahve letteth down upon him | with tabrets and guitars and with battles of swing-sacrifices will they fight against it. || —Long ago indeed was the pile got ready, even for the king also is it prepared deep and broad ; | it can contain much fire and wood : | Yahvé's breath like a torrent of brimstone kindleth it. ||

4.

XXXI.

1 O they who go down to Egypt for help, upon horses staying themselves, | and trust in horsemen that there are many of them, and in riders that they are very numerous, || without ever looking to the Holy One of Israel, and without ever seeking Yahvé ! || Yet he also is wise and announced evil and hath never changed his words, | but ariseth against the house of the evil, and against the help of the workers of iniquity. || But Egyptians are men and not God, and their horses flesh not spirit, |

and Yahvé will stretch out his hand so that the helper stumbleth and the helped falleth, and together they all perish. || — For thus saith Yahvé unto me: Just as the lion and the young-lion growleth over his prey, against whom a multitude of shepherds is called—at their voice he trembleth not, and at their noise he croucheth not — : | so will Yahvé of Hosts come down with his host  
 5 upon mount Ssion and upon its hill, || as fluttering birds, so will Yahvé of Hosts shield Jerusalem, | shield and so deliver, pass over and so redeem. || — O return ye unto him whom they deeply injured, sons of Israel! || for on that day they shall each one reject his silver idols and his golden idols, | which your hands made you for a sin, || and Assur falleth by no man's sword and no man's sword will devour him: | he fleeth before the sword, and his brave ones are for servitude, || and his rock he misseth from terror, and his princes run trembling from the standard, | saith Yahvé who hath a fire in Ssion, and a hearth in Jerusalem. ||

## 5.

## XXXII.

1. Behold according to justice will the ruler rule, | and the governors—according to equity govern, || so that each one is as a hiding-place from the storm and a covert from the tempest, | as water-brooks in a drought, as a mighty rock's shadow in a languishing land. || And the eyes of those who see are then not closed, | the ears of those who hear



are attentive, || and the heart of the rash hath wise understanding, | and the tongue of stammerers  
 5 speaketh clearly with readiness. || No more is the worthless man called nobleman, | nor is the intriguer greeted as Worthy; || for a worthless man speaketh worthless things, and his heart prepareth evil, | to work unholiness and to speak against Yahvé folly, to let the soul of the hungry famish and to take away the drink of the thirsty; || and an *intriguer*—his *intricacies* are evil, | he adviseth to misdeeds, to destroy the suffering with lying words, and thereby that he prosecuteth the helpless: || the noble adviseth to noble things; | and he will stand to noble things. ||

1. xxx. 8-17. Unexpectedly one of the most important portions of the entire oration had just been brought forward, the oracle of the certainty that Egypt will not render assistance. It is true, at present people will not believe that; but Yesaya has received the assurance of it from Yahvé, and now hears further, after that the great word has gone forth, in perfect calmness the higher command to write down this oracle at home, that is, to set up the brief enigmatical word with which the previous oration closed upon a tablet before the eyes of those who now refuse to believe it, and to write all the rest in a book, in order that both tablet and book may subsequently serve when the fulfilment comes as an eternal testimony to the prophetic truth, ver. 8, comp. viii. 1, 16. They are indeed at present (and here echoes of the former powerful oration occur, i. 2 sq.) rebellious sons, denying their God and benefactor, sons who cannot even endure the genuine prophetic word, because it places before their eyes the Holy One, while they wish that the genuine prophets would not speak at all, or in any case falsely and insincerely, forsaking the eternal path,

vv. 9-11. But they must still hear the divine word, in order that precisely this contempt of the prophetic word and their dishonest violence in the government may finally issue in a complete overthrow, with as much certainty as a rent, perhaps hitherto quite hidden, in a high wall goes deeper and deeper, and swells out until suddenly it precipitates the whole of the lofty wall in ruins, just as when a poor man's earthenware is dashed to pieces, so that he has not even a sherd left for the simplest necessities of life, vv. 12-14. For long ago Yahvé pronounced peace, possession of mind, and trust in him the only available means of your deliverance, comp. ch. vii. : but ye preferred commotion and haughtiness, to pursue upon Egyptian chargers and racers (Hos. xiv. 4) ; well, then, ye shall run from your enemies (the Assyrians) in the most disgraceful manner and fall, until ye remain as solitary in the land as a lonely memorial sign upon the mountains, vv. 15-17, comp. xvii. 6 ; v. 26.—But this precisely the source whence

2. the present mournful condition of indecision comes, of the impossibility that Yahvé should be able, however much he may desire to do it, at once to save you : for as the Just One he cannot endure for ever the great injustice which now prevails upon the earth through the Assyrians ; he is already preparing himself to restore justice and help the pious sufferers, sooner or later the deliverer comes, blessed, therefore, are all who patiently wait for him ! Thus ver. 18 forms the transition to the new strophe, in which the prophet passes entirely to the consolation of the faithful. For in any case (thus the discourse rises again with new life, ver. 19, the very address quivering with the fire of the blessed hope, which here for the first time breaks forth without restraint), thou nation in Ssion shalt not perish calling in repentance and humility upon thy God, comp. xxix. 4, but precisely in the deepest trouble, when the Lord presents to you as bread and water nothing but distress (*i.e.* in the siege, 1 Kings xxii. 27), then will he, who now hides himself from you, and whom you do not see, be quite near

and perceptible to you as the true teacher and leader, that ye may always see and hear Him, and then, therefore, knowingly cast away with a true and profound abomination your splendid idols as something loathsome, since ye have then found the true eternal God, vv. 19-22. And how glorious will be that time of harmony between Yahvé and men! even the ground will be more fruitful, the toiling cattle less poorly kept, and barren mountains flooded with water, vv. 22-25, comp. iv. 2; Joel iv. 18; and if humbler things become more glorious, how much more higher things, the light from above, so that the moon then will be as the glow-light, *i.e.* sunlight, and the sun as if the glow of seven days as they now are shone at the same time, ver. 26, comp. iv. 5 sq.; Rev. xxi. 11, 23. But at the end of the last two verses the fact is referred to with great significance and beauty, that the happiness cannot come before the great day of decision and conflict, when on the one hand towers fall (in this connexion, therefore, somewhat different from ii. 15, so that everything high, including what is high amongst men, may be understood, comp. ver. 33), on the other, the wounds of the genuine kingdom will be removed, i. 5; which forms the transition to the next strophe,

3. vv. 27-33, which is a description in more exalted language of the great moment of the decision itself, as the prophetic imagination conceives it according to the model of the great deliverance of ancient times, Ex. ch. xiv. and xv. The *name* of Yahvé, Yahvé as far as he can become visibly manifest, will come from the distant heaven, appearing as in clouds of fire, terrible and alarming (Ps. l. 3): with these figures a description is commenced, ver. 27, which notwithstanding the models that had preceded it, is as unique as the unfolding of the great Assyrian drama itself, which was then commencing. That the Assyrians would dash themselves against the Temple in blind rage, was foreseen by Yesaya (comp. xxix. 1-7; x. 28-34); but his firm faith in the indestructibility of the true Sanctuary and an upward glance to the true God, brought most clearly before

his clarified eye the knowledge that this day will become a high festival, such as had not been experienced before, when Yahvé himself, amidst the rejoicing of his people, will choose out the Assyrian for himself as an offering, when his breath, like a mountain-torrent suddenly rising to men's necks (viii. 8), will seize the Heathen, in order that, laying hold upon them with a *swing*, or fan, of *delusion*, and with a subduing but misleading cheek-bridle, with which wild beasts are tamed (xxxvii. 29), it may hurl them to the Sanctuary, ver. 28, that they may not find what they desire to destroy, Ps. lix. 12; whilst the Redeemed sing and rejoice, as on the joyous feast when great multitudes journey up to the Temple, to the rock of Israel, *i.e.* to Yahvé, amid endless exultation, Yahvé will appear in conflict from above in the majestic tempest, with which he terrifies and destroys the ungodly, vv. 29, 30. Yea, to declare it most plainly, the Assyrian shall so tremble at Yahvé's thunder and his rod that every stroke which falls upon him from above is greeted from below with unmixed delight, and not with weak but mightily swinging battles of sacrifices the war is carried on against him, vv. 31, 32.—For as the rod or chastisement of Yahvé, was already, ver. 32, said to be firmly established, unavoidably decreed, the punishment has been long necessary, so the pile is prepared, even for the Assyrian king himself if it is needful, a deep and broad pile, whose circumference or enclosure is much fire and wood: then it needs only the fiery breath of Yahvé, ver. 27, to kindle it! ver. 33, with which this strophe returning to the figure at the commencement, vv. 27, 28, most fittingly closes.

4. Chap. xxxi. By the three foregoing strophes, which have gradually attained the greatest elevation, the preparation has been made for a descent from this height upon the matter which is of first concern, and once more with still greater force than in the last strophe of the previous section, xxx. 1-7, to rebuke the false confidence which they who are here chiefly opposed place in external, material things, in this case the Egyptians



and their numerous chariots and horses. How mistaken and unnecessary this is, this strophe proves in the most complete manner. How mistaken it is, appears not only from the thing itself, but still more from the consideration that Yahvé, whom they have thereby not considered although he alone deserves their confidence, is after all, however wise they imagine themselves to be in the air of mystery they put on toward him, xxix. 15, much wiser, and sees through their perversity. Hence Yahvé has already *brought*, *i.e.*, announced evil by Yesaya, acc. xxx. 3-7, and, since he never alters his words, will certainly execute this threatened punishment on both parties, the evil-doers who seek such help and the Egyptians, vv. 1-3. That it is unnecessary appears from Yahvé's solemn promise, xxix. 1-7, that he intends himself to help; and if ever so many Heathen gathered in a threatening manner around the sanctuary upon the hill of Ssion, he descends with power upon it, (to repeat the image from xxix. 1-7) like a fearless lion with a terrible roar upon the prey which he has in his eye, or rather as birds which flutter around their nests, protecting and defending them, Deut. xxxii. 11, and his simple protection, his gracious passing-by, as formerly at the Pascha (to which there is here even a verbal allusion, Exod. xii. 13), is deliverance and redemption itself, vv. 4, 5. O return, therefore, with penitence to him who has been deeply injured (properly, with regard to whom they have deeply revolted, i. 5), while there is yet time! for then it is too late, then every one casts his idols, which he has made to his own guilt, away, ii. 18-22, and the Assyrian with his army falls then by the sword of a Higher One, before the approaching judge Yahvé, as is described xxx. 27-33, with such terror that in blind and hurried flight he misses his own fortress and his princes in like fright abandon their standard that they may by some means escape (comp. *e.g.*, Job xv. 23, 24). For, as is significantly added at the end, not in vain has Yahvé his hearth in Ssion.

5. xxxii. 1-8. The closing strophe the more naturally falls



again, with a change of tone, into the description of the blessed time, inasmuch as this had not received its due treatment in the previous long section. One aspect of this description which, after the brief allusion xxviii. 6, had not been definitely brought forward, is here very appropriately supplied, namely, that then the government and executive itself, the axis of the kingdom, will be improved from its very basis: which is not elaborated here in such exalted imagery as xi. 1-9, but is on that very account the more applicable to the thoughtless magnates who opposed the prophet; it is in a style which stoops to the hearers' necessities, becoming simply didactic at times, and the description is continued until the verses required to make a strophe have been supplied. King and princes will then be what their vocation requires them to be, giving protection and refreshment by righteous decisions in every matter, vv. 1, 2; obduracy towards the truth and inability to fill their offices, as is at present the case with the blind and deaf, drunken and stammering magnates, xxviii. 7-10; xxix. 9-12, will not then be found, vv. 3, 4, comp. a similar statement xxix. 18, 24; and the confusion of ideas and positions, according to which at present the most worthless man, or "windbag," is decorated with the most honourable names, will be then unknown, ver. 5: but that this mischievous confusion is now really made, admits of no doubt, one has only to examine the ideas closely! a worthless man, one inwardly corrupt (in Hebrew properly a *fool*), and nothing more, is he who speaks and meditates evil, to sin both against Yahvé and his helpless neighbour, and an intriguer is he who counsels to empty and evil methods with a view to carrying out the injustice which seems to be useful, although such a worthless man or such an intriguer may wear a high name in the state; a truly noble man does not merely purpose to do noble things but will stand to his purpose, and in the end conquer, has in any case the divine promise on his side (with which a concise and powerful conclusion is made), vv. 6-8.

xxx. 8, instead of לְעֶד *for ever*, which before the following *unto eternity* would in this case be somewhat superfluous and cumbrous, it is better to read with the Vulgate לְעֶד, comp. viii. 2; xix. 20.

xxx. 16, the various paronomasiæ are represented in the translation.—Ver. 18, it is necessary to read יְדוֹם or יְדוּם instead of יָרוּם, *he is high*, which would not make sense here.

In the beautiful description, xxx. 20-22, מוֹרִיךְ *sing.* as well as מַקְנִיךְ ver. 23, must be taken acc. § 256 *b*; דוּחַ acc. to Job vi. 7, זֶרֶחַ is Aram. *zerô* and Arab. *zarâ* (not Arab. *dharâ*), Numb. xi. 20.

If זֶרֶחַ xxx. 24, § 169 *d*, is held to be the part. Pual, it is on the supposition that according to Prov. xx. 8, 26, זֶרֶחַ rather than זָרַח denotes *to sift* as an art; but it is true that after the relative אֲשֶׁר the perf. זֶרַח would then be more natural here.

xxx. 27, בַּעַר אֶפֶס is a subordinate condition-sentence, [see Ewald's *Introductory Hebrew Grammar*, §§ 306, 341, and Driver, *On the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew*, (Oxford, 1874), App. I.] as 2 Sam. xv. 32, § 288 *c*, and מִשָּׂאָה כִּבְדּוֹ *with violence of uprising*, is subordinated still more concisely in the simple accusative, acc. § 279 *d*; but the word מִשָּׂאָה has certainly the meaning found in Judg. xx. 38 of the *Germ. Schwall*, the swell of rising waves and storms, a column growing higher and higher.

The unusual figures, xxx. 28, comp. ver. 32, can be understood only as it is remembered, (1) that הִנִּיף both here and ver. 32 is an expression explained by the considerations given in the *Alterthümer*, p. 98 sq. (85 sq.); (2) that שָׁוְיָא both here and v. 18 retains its primary meaning of *vanity, delusion*, corresponding to the following מַהֲפֵחָה *misleading*, and that the *swing* or *fan, of delusion* and this *misleading bridle* form a popular mythical image resembling our fabulous coat of darkness; (3) that, in as far as ultimately the experience of unusual violent transportations and legends arising therefrom have had great

influence here, the entire illustration is taken from *the breath* of a whirlwind, or a similar storm.—Ver. 31 *b*, the present reading *Assur who smiteth* like a slave-driver *with the staff*, would have to be understood after the analogy of such phrases as x. 5, 24 : but such phrases are suitable in their own connexion, while they are not here appropriate ; besides in this place the phrase would be extremely abrupt and unfinished, even if יִכָּה were restored according to x. 24. Besides, from the structure of the strophes and because the idea of שבט is plainly carried on, ver. 32, by מטה, it is necessary to read here מִשְׁבֵּט and יִכָּה, the fem. suff. in the latter word, as in כָּהָה, ver. 32, being explained by the fact that Assur, like all names of countries, may be construed as either masculine or feminine : still it might be easier to read יִכָּה in ver. 31 with the LXX. and כָּהָה ver. 32, with numerous authorities, just as the sing. and plur. interchange in the similar case, x. 5, 28, 29. With regard to ver. 32, where the accents must be altered, comp. further §§ 319 *b*, 345 *b*, and on ver. 33, §§ 173 *g*, 319 *b*. Since the originally fem. רַבְרָה becomes also a masculine, the genders here alternate beautifully with the verse-members, in the same way as the plur. and sing. of the address, where both are permissible, vv. 19-21, most naturally interchange with the verse-members.

xxx. 1, the וְ before יִשְׁעֵנוּ על כִּסִּים must be removed, as is done in good MSS., giving greater symmetry to the verse-structure.—In xxx. 2, *to bring* may denote in prophetic language *to announce*, as also in poetic language, see on Ps. lxxi. 16.—לִצְפָּא ver. 4, which is added more for the sake of the paronomasia merely, has not erroneously been connected by the Massorites with עַל, although the sense is here different from that it bears in xxix. 8.

xxxii. 3, if רַשְׁעֵינָה had been correctly pointed, לֵא would have to be read as לוֹ, and *to Him* (God) *will they who see* look, and they who hear give heed ; but this reference to God does not lie in the context. We must therefore read רַשְׁעֵינָה, acc. xxix. 9, 18 ; vi. 10.

The word פִּילִי, which becomes פִּלִּי in ver. 7, merely for the sake of the paronomasia, derived from פִּיל = פִּיר Arab. *kaid*, is exactly what is in German called a *Ränkemacher*, intriguer, plotter of mischief; and from the description it is evident that the crime of the פִּילִי is supposed to lie in the counsel which he gives, while that of the נָבִל consists in the ideas and feelings according to which he acts. With regard to דָּבָר מְשָׁפֵט see § 283 d; 2 Kings xxv. 6 may probably be taken in the same sense, only אָהֳרִי is to be read. Comp. the *Jahrbb. der Bibl. Wiss.* I., p. 100.

#### 4. EPISODICAL ORATION ADDRESSED TO THE WOMEN.

CONCLUSION. Ch. xxxii. 9-20.

Yesaya adds here, as in a side-corner, a similarly earnest word against the careless, luxurious women of the capital, without doubt reproducing a discourse which he had upon some recent occasion publicly delivered. This has similarity with the discourse of the earliest book, iii. 16 sq.: but although he deems a similar admonition necessary, vv. 9-13, he recurs in this case earlier than he did then to the main subject of the entire book, his agitated voice rising and falling here also between the threatening and the consolation of the prophecy, until it finds its goal in a suitable exhortation, ver. 14; 15-18; 19-20.

Careless women, rise hear ye my voice, | ye secure  
 10 daughters, mark my speech ! || After a year and a  
 day shall ye secure ones tremble ! | for the vintage  
 hath perished, the fruit-harvest cometh not in. || Be  
 alarmed ye careless ones, tremble ye secure ones, |  
 strip yourselves naked, and put the girdle upon your  
 loins ! || upon the *fair* breast will they soon smite |  
 on account of the pleasant *fare*, on account of the  
 fruitful vine : || upon the ground of my people will



- thorn and thistle come up, | yea upon all houses of pleasure, of the joyous city. || —For the palace will be forsaken, the throng of the city be made desert, | Hillside and Pleasure-tower serveth instead of caves for ever, as a joy of wild asses as a pasture  
 15 of flocks || —until there be poured upon us a spirit from on high, | and the desert becometh a fruit-field and the fruit-field is counted as forest, || and in the desert dwelleth justice, | and righteousness in the fruit-field maketh abode, || the fruit of righteousness is peace, | and the profit of righteousness quiet and security for ever, || and my people maketh abode in the pasture of peace, | in secure dwellings and in careless resting-places. || — But *hail will come down* when the forest *cometh down* | and to the ground will the city be abased. ||  
 20 Blessed are ye who sow by all waters, | who put in motion the foot of the ox and the ass ! ||

The women, they who still live carelessly and luxuriously notwithstanding the growing seriousness of the time, shall soon be touched most acutely by that which primarily concerns them with their household cares—by unfruitfulness and laying waste of the cultivated soil, so that great scarcity is felt in the houses vv. 9, 10, comp. v. 10, 17; vii. 23-25. Yea, cries the prophet to them in still more threatening tones, ver. 11, tremble, and instead of your own ornaments, which have been carried off by the barbarous enemy, place sackcloth upon the bare body, comp. iii. 24; very soon there will be beating upon the breast (in the well-known manner, *plangere*, Nah. ii. 8), at the loss of the beautiful fruitful fields, upon which, as well as even upon the ruins of the city which is now so full of joy and luxury (xxii. 2), nothing but weeds will grow, vv. 12, 13.—For



it is indeed true, as Yesaya but briefly urges again from his earlier oracles, that on that spot where now the wild, uproarious joy of Jerusalem reigns, desert, waste loneliness will arise, and where now on a *slope* of the temple-hill ('*Ophel* Neh. iii. 27; Mic. iv. 8) the most ornamental pleasure-turrets rise, there there will be caverns for wild beasts, ver. 14—for an indefinite period, until at length there comes from above the spiritual transformation and amendment, which permeates lower things, filling the entire land, desert and fruit-field, with righteousness and its fair fruits—quiet and peace, vv. 15-18, comp. xxix. 17; Joel iii. 1.—But, it must be once more finally added, severe punishments and tempests must first come; *but it will hail* (briefly repeated from xxviii. 2; xxix. 6; xxx. 30), when forest and city, *i.e.*, everything that is high and proud in the land, falls and is deeply bowed down, therefore when the punishment cometh, ver. 19 (a paronomasia adds further force to the concise, incisive language, city=citadel, Mic. v. 13): blessed are they therefore who cultivate their fields in the most fitting spots (anywhere where there is water), and industriously (driving to their work the ox and the ass, which are used in husbandry, xxx. 24), in order that they may some day reap a good harvest! Since the judgment is the matter spoken of, it follows as a matter of course that the illustration is to be understood morally of the pursuit of duty; it is only he who sows near abundance of water who does not sow upon unproductive ground, it is only he who spares no pains and labour who can expect to reap; and the figure was the more natural, since just before, vv. 13, 14, the barren field had been spoken of as the punishment of sin.

All the imperatives רָגַזְתָּ, חָגַרְתָּ, etc. ver. 11, must acc. § 226 *a*, have suffered in this case contraction from רָגַזְתָּה, חָגַרְתָּה, etc., a formation which does not occur elsewhere, but is possible in the language of the people and is sufficiently clear in this instance, Yesaya probably making the change

from the common form of ver. 9 for the sake of imitating the affected language of such women.

The rendering of the words *upon the breasts will they soon smite on account of the pleasant fields*, ver. 12, is free, in order that the forcible paronomasia of the Hebrew may not be left unrepresented.\*

“Hail will come down” is instead of the simple *it will hail*, ver. 19, to bring out the paronomasia. Another German rendering would be “aber stürmen (wird’s) wann stürzt der Wald und in den grund versinkt die Stadt.”

Finally, the prophecy of the complete destruction of Jerusalem, vv. 13, 14, 19, might seem to contradict that of the deliverance of Ssion, xxix. 1-9, did not one bear in mind that Yesaya after all only brings forward again what he had already said chap. vii., and that the idea of Ssion as far as it is something indestructible leads up of itself into higher regions. Comp. further on this subject the commentary on Micah, chaps. iv. and v. below.

\* The author’s rendering in the text is : “Auf leib und brust wird man bald schlagen | ob der verlornen leibgerichte.”—Tr.

## VI.—YESAYA'S SIXTH BOOK.

Ch. x. 5—xii. 6 ; xiv. 24-27 ; xvii. 12—xviii. 7 ; xx.

Meanwhile Samaria actually fell in the year 719 : and the whole power of the Assyrians was thrown with the more oppressive weight upon the remaining kingdom with its head at Jerusalem. There came now the troubled times of the chastising hand of God upon this kingdom, of which Yesaya had prophesied in all his earlier books : they did not come at once in the special form of a severe siege of Jerusalem as he had most recently prophesied, xxix. 1-8, and yet times of the same oppressive and continued calamity had only too truly arrived. The Assyrians had manifestly long sought a pretext for taking the strong fortress of Jerusalem into their hands, and for destroying the kingdom of Yuda, as they had done that of Samaria, its religion being as unintelligible to them as that of the Northern Kingdom. The hopes which many magnates in Jerusalem still continued to place upon Egypt and the Æthiopic kingdom which had at that time become powerful, might supply them with the desired pretext. And the new reign of Sancherib aimed more violently and unsparingly than any former one at finally putting into execution the Assyrian plans of conquest against all the Southern Nations (Herod. ii. 141). It was under the pressure of this threatened evil that the whole land of Yuda had been suffering now for years ; the well-meaning, gentle king Hizqia was exposed to increasing demands and dishonour ; the whole house of David, and with it what was in those times the firmest stay of all Messianic hope, seemed with growing clearness to be advancing to its destruction. But amid those wholly altered circumstances Yesaya preserved the true glance and the imperturbable strength of a genuine prophet ; and in what way he then laboured is most clearly shown to us by this his sixth book. It must have been published about

the year 713 B.C., and appears to have been preserved in a fairly complete form, so far as its main portions are concerned. We have but to correctly separate and arrange its constituent pieces. Its main piece was without doubt the following oracle.

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1.—THE ORACLE CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF THE ASSYRIAN  
AND THE KINGDOM OF THE MESSIAH.

Ch. x. 5—xii. 6.

It introduces us at once to an entirely different period. For this great oration presupposes all the earlier ones of our prophet, especially the last long one; and the brief expressions, x. 12, 23, refer plainly to the more detailed explanations which had been given in earlier passages, xxix. 1-8, 23; xxviii. 21, 22; the destruction of Samaria is also referred to as past, x. 11. But whilst Yesaya had continued, even in the last of the previous pieces, to anticipate further chastisements of Israel by means of the Assyrian, foreseeing at the same time with equal clearness his overthrow, in the present piece the prophet's mind beholds him so far advanced in the immoderation of cruelty and in the pure love of destruction which is the result of unrestrained unrighteousness, that he can no longer look upon him as an instrument of divine punishment, but must think of him as himself the great example of divine chastisement. This is the new element of the present discourse: and therewith is connected the fact, that Yesaya no longer anticipates, as he had done, ch. xxviii-xxxii., a close environment and long siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrian, but on the contrary his rapid overthrow, as soon as ever, with hasty step, eager to destroy, and with insolent threats, he arrives before the sanctuary, x. 28-34, comp. xvii. 14. In fact, this is the first oration aimed directly and solely against the Assyrian, and it must have been occasioned by some new evidence of Assyrian inhumanity; the oration scarcely glances incidentally at the perversities which were still to be found in Yuda, x. 20-23. On the contrary, the



oration, notwithstanding its violent commencement against the Assyrian, is occupied throughout its course in comforting and encouraging the oppressed and distressed people, and beyond any of its predecessors issues in lovely and cheering pictures of the blessed age. After the first of the five strophes, x. 5-15, has sufficiently chastised the haughtiness of the Assyrian, the second handles the impending divine judgment, both as a general and as a special judgment, x. 16-23, so that the last three are occupied entirely with imparting consolation, first, with the consideration of the certainty of the overthrow of the Assyrian at the very moment when he thinks that he has with his insolent hand destroyed the last Sanctuary and asylum of the earth, x. 24-34, then still more with the consideration of the blessed age which is then possible, both with respect to its internal nature, xi. 1-9, and its relation to the world without, xi. 10-16. The relation to the world without leading to reference to the Assyrians again, the discourse is brought round at its close to its starting point. The six verses that follow are an addition by a much later prophet.

But if in the course of this oration Yesaya sketches a picture of the Messianic age and especially of the Messiah himself, which, in respect of charming and graphic clearness, as well as of blessed repose and enchanting beauty, surpasses all that he had ever thought well to describe in any of his earlier writings, a sufficient explanation is found in the vast and direct contrast in which he was compelled to place the reign of the Messiah, which had never before been so longed for as now, with that of the Assyrians, which had at this time been fully experienced. The more painful the experience of this had been, so much the more clearly and intensely could people long for its most direct opposite, and the more was the prophet compelled to raise up those who had been so long bowed down by the certain hope in the consummation of the theocracy and by the brightest pictures of this consummation. And if he knew well that this consummation in its perfection could be but gradually attained



to and at that time was still in a backward state, yet this would only compel him the more definitely to present the form it must some time certainly assume, and its essential characteristics.

## 1.

## X.

5 O Assur thou staff of my anger, | and who executeth as a rod my wrath! || against an unholy nation I send him, and against people of my indignation I appoint him, | to prey upon the prey and to plunder the plunder, and to trample it small like the mire of the streets: || yet he thinketh not so, and his heart reckoneth not so, | but to destroy is in his mind, and to cut off not a few nations; || since he saith: | “are not my princes as a body kings! || is not Kalno as Karkemîsh? | or Hamâth  
10 not as Arpad? or Samaria not as Damascus? || as my hand reached to the idol-countries, | whose images are more than those of Jerusalem and Samaria, || — yea as I did unto Samaria and its idols, | so will I do to Jerusalem and its gods!” || But when Yahvé shall finish his whole work upon Mount Ssion and in Jerusalem, | — I will visit the fruit of the haughtiness of the Assyrian king and the vainglory of his proud eyes, || in that he saith “by the strength of mine hand I did it, and by my wisdom because I am intelligent, | remove the boundaries of the nations, and plunder their stores | and cast down as a God the enthroned: || yea my hand found as a nest the wealth of the nations, and as one gathereth forsaken eggs I gathered the

whole earth, | while there was not one with a fluttering wing, and opening its mouth and chirping!" || — O then doth the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith, or doth the saw brag against him that swingeth it ? | as if the staff should swing him that raiseth it, as if the rod should raise that which is not wood !—

## 2.

Therefore will the Lord Yahvé of Hosts send into his fat limbs consumption, | and under his glory will a flame flame forth as fire flameth, || Israel's light will be a fire and his Holy One a flame : | which kindleth and devoureth his thorns and thistles in a day, || and the majesty of his forest and fruitfield will he consume from the soul to the body, | so that it is as when a sick man sickeneth away ; || but the remnant of his forest-trees will be soon counted, | and a boy would write them down. || — Then on that day the remnant of Israel and the residue of the House of Yaqob will no longer stay itself upon him that smiteth it, | but stay itself upon Yahvé the Holy One of Israel with faithfulness. || *The remnant will return, the remnant of Yaqob* | to the Hero-God ! || for if thy people O Israel were even as the sand of the sea : | *a remnant will return of it*, | destruction is decided, overflowing with righteousness ; || for an end and decision will the Lord Yahvé of Hosts perform in the midst of the whole earth. ||

## 3.

Therefore thus saith the Lord Yahvé of Hosts:  
 Fear not my people dwelling in Ssion on account  
 of Assur, | who smiteth thee with the staff and  
 raiseth his rod over thee in the Egyptian manner: ||  
 25 for yet a little a little while,—and the wrath is  
 passed: and my anger is for their wasting; || and  
 Yahvé of Hosts moveth over him a scourge as he  
 smote Midyan at the rock of the ravens, | and his  
 rod over the sea—he raiseth it in the Egyptian  
 manner. || Then on that day will his burden de-  
 part from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from thy  
 neck: | for destroyed is a youth by fat. || — He  
 cometh by 'Aiyâth, marcheth through Migron, | at  
 Mikmash he layeth up his baggage; || they pass  
 through the Pass, Géba' they make the night-camp, |  
 Harâma trembleth, Gibeah of Saul fleeth, || —  
 30 shriek aloud, daughter Gallim, | hearken Láischa,  
 answer her Anathoth! — || in motion is Madmena, |  
 the inhabitants of Gæbim flit; || yet to-day he  
 must rest in Nob, | he swingeth on high his hand  
 against the mountain of the daughter Ssion, the  
 hill of Jerusalem: || — behold the Lord Yahvé of  
 Hosts cleaveth the crown with sudden fright, | and  
 those high of stature have been hewn down, the  
 lofty are humbled; || smitten down are the thickets  
 of the forest with iron, | and the Lebanon felled  
 by a Majestical One.

## 4.

## XI.

1 Then will a shoot from Ishaï's worn stem sprout

forth, | and a green branch burst forth from his roots: || and there resteth upon him Yahvé's spirit, | the spirit of wisdom and reason, the spirit of counsel and valour, the spirit of knowledge and fear of Yahvé; || and his breathing is in Yahvé's fear, | and not after the sight of his eyes judgeth he, nor after the hearing of his ears giveth he decision, || but judgeth after justice the oppressed, and giveth decision after equity to the sufferers of the earth; | he smiteth then the earth with the staff of his mouth, and slayeth by the breath of his lips the wicked, || so that justice is the girdle of his waist, | and faithfulness the girdle of his loins. || Then the wolf lodgeth with the lamb, and the leopard re-  
 5     poseth with the kid, | and calf and young lion and fatling are together, led by the youngest child; || cow and she-bear will pasture, their young repose together, | and the lion like the ox eateth straw; || and a suckling stroketh the adder's feeler, | and over the cerast's flashing eye hath a weaned child stretched his hand. || They will not do evil nor commit wickedness upon all my holy mountain: | because the earth is full of the knowledge of Yahvé as the waters cover the sea. ||

## 5.

10     And on that day the rootshoot of Ishaï, which standeth as a banner of the nations, will be sought by the Heathen, | and his resting-place will be honour. || And on that day will Yahvé again a second time cause his hand to redeem the remnant

of his people, | which is left from Assur and from Egypt and from Pathros and from Kûsh, and from 'Aelâm and from Shin'ar, and from Hamâth and from the islands of the sea: || he raiseth a banner to the Heathen, and gathereth the dispersed of Israel, | and the scattered of Yuda assembleth he men and women from the four corners of the earth. || Then the jealousy of Ephráim departeth and the restless ones of Yuda will be cut off, | Ephráim will not envy Yuda, and Yuda will not disturb Ephráim: || and they fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines towards the sea, together they plunder the sons of the Easterns, | Edóm and Môab are the seizure of their hand, the children of Ammon

15 their obedience. || — And Yahvé curseth the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and swingeth his hand over the Euphrates with the burning of his breath, | smiteth it into seven streams, and causeth it to be trodden with shoes, || so that a road hath the remnant of his people which is left from Assur, | just as Israel had it when it marched up out of Egypt.

## XII.

1 And thou singest on that day :—

I will praise thee Yahvé! for thou wast angry with me,  
 thine anger is allayed and thou comfortest me;  
 behold the God of my salvation,  
 I trust and tremble not,  
 for my boast and my song is Yah Yahvé,  
 and he became my salvation.

Thus ye draw water with delight | from the wells of salvation || and sing on that day :—



Give thanks unto Yahvé, call upon his name,  
 proclaim among the nations his deeds,  
 boast that his name is exalted !  
 play unto Yahvé, that he did great things ;  
 let this be known in all the earth !  
 Rejoice aloud thou citizen Ssion,  
 that great amongst you is Israel's Holy One !

1. The very first words issue from the fundamental thought of the entire oration. The Assyrian is in Yahvé's sight simply the instrument to execute his terrible anger ; he has received all his present power from Yahvé (not from himself), as something lent to him for a definite commission and purpose, namely, to spoil and to subdue, within the limits defined in ver. 6, the nations who deserve punishment. That is a divine appointment or the will of Yahvé concerning him ; hence the *pres.* ver. 6. But then he desires to be something on his own account, to determine his own destination ; he intends to execute destruction, and the destruction of as many nations as possible, ver. 7, in haughty pride over-estimating his power, boasting that he is the king of kings, whose princes (courtiers) are all equal to kings, and vaunting that all foreign lands (with regard to the names, ver. 9, comp. *History of Israel*, IV. 150 (III. 638), without distinction met the same doom from him and his omnipotence, so that if all the Heathen kingdoms beginning from the extreme north had been subdued by him, although in his view their gods had been much more numerous and more powerful than those of the Israelite kingdoms, yea, if even Samaria's gods had not been able to stand against him, surely little Yuda, with its very few, really hardly visible, idol-images, will form no exception ! vv. 8-11, comp. xxxvi. 6, 7, 19 ; xxxvii. 13. As a Heathen he speaks as if he knew in all kingdoms nothing but idols, powerful or weak ones, many or few, according to the material greatness of the countries ; although the Hebrew distinction of the Heathen or idol kingdoms appears, vv. 10, 11.—Yet Yahvé (the prophetic language inter-

rupting the exposition of the Assyrian's thought) will at the right time, when he will finish the entire work which he has promised (ver. 12 as xxviii. 21) punish this insolent pride, that he imagines that he has done everything by his own power and wisdom, and boasts that he has in his hands as a God the fate of nations and kings, or that like a mischievous boy he can destroy nests while nothing dares to stir against him ! vv. 12-14 : but has one ever heard that the instrument boasts itself against its owner and master ? that would be in reality as if it should put in motion that which moves it, as if the wooden rod should raise that which is verily quite different from wood, the arm that raises it ! Thus the discourse returns, ver. 15, with a severe, taunting proof to its fundamental thought and even to its first words, ver. 5.

2. The deserved punishment must therefore overtake him, vv. 16-19, which is now more particularly described, while it had been hardly indicated, ver. 12, and there was no further space for its fuller description in the first strophe. It is true that the Assyrian armies are at present there as in close, fat columns (repeated Ps. lxxviii. 31) : but as a consumption soon consumes even the fattest body, so Yahvé sends into the fat limbs of the Assyrian an insidious disease, so that he soon declines, xvii. 4 ; or rather a sudden fire, namely, the wrath of Yahvé heated to a fire, is enkindled under his majesty and splendour (the commander at the head of the army), quickly seizing everything, both what is low, the rapidly consumed thorns and thistles, and what is high, the lofty forest and fruit trees, comp. ix. 13, 17 ; xxxii. 15, 16. These two figures appear, ver. 16, side by side, but subsequently, vv. 17-19, they are more closely interwoven, in accordance with a frequent custom of Yesaya's, yet in such a way that the more forcible one of fire takes the lead. Then the reformed and purified remnant of the nation will possess without interruption the true confidence in the true helper, and no more in such helpers as the Assyrians who were once called in by Ahaz, who are

really its destroyers, ver. 20; yea (the discourse breaks out with joyous emotion), the thought upon which all hope is based remains, that the remnant of the ancient community will yet be converted to the Hero-God, the true helper (ix. 5), ver. 21—it is true, not more than a remnant, a very small number; destruction is once for all unalterably decided, bringing in righteousness in full streams (for all sinners without distinction, including the many in Jerusalem), ver. 22, for precisely in the centre of the earth, at Ssion, will Yahvé hold this judgment, ver. 23, how few will then be able to stand! comp. xxxiii. 13-16, and ch. xviii. This would be the place to speak more fully about the internal shortcomings of the nation which still remain unamended; but Yesaya is satisfied to make only these few backward references, spoken however with great emotion, to earlier prophécies, xxviii. and xxii., since the discourse hastens rather to console the nation in its state of overwhelming distress.

3. Therefore, because the punishment of the Assyrian is so certain, have no fear of him who now, as the Egyptian formerly, brandishes over you the slave-driver's stick! ver. 24: for in a little time (acc. xxix. 17) the trying, hot hour of the divine wrath passes over from Israel, vv. 5, 6, and directs itself on the contrary against the Assyrians, to destroy them; and as Yahvé formerly chastised Midyan, ix. 3, or rather as he chastised the Egyptian and the Red Sea in the time of Moses, so will he now swing his scourge over the Assyrian; and if the Assyrian's tyranny is now Egyptian, so will he also feel the Egyptian rod which was once brandished over the Red Sea, vv. 25, 26. If it is therefore an old proverb, "ruined is a *youth* by fat," and if children who suffer from a too rapid accumulation of fat more easily perish, so will that Assyrian body, which acc. ver. 16, has long ago grown too fat, quickly waste away, so that Israel will get free of his *yoke* just as formerly it was freed from that of Egypt. This is expressed in ver. 27 in a paronomasia between *yoke* [Germ. *joch*] and *youth* [Germ. *junge*],

which is much more perceptible in Hebrew than in our language.—It is probable enough that he may advance with a well armed host, and in rapid marches, against the Sanctuary, spreading terror everywhere by his approach, yea, he may in the presence of it raise his insolent hand threateningly against it, vv. 28-32: but at that moment there descends suddenly upon him what seems to be an overwhelming tempest from on high, discrowning even the loftiest trees, and soon hewing down as with an axe all that proud forest which was mentioned ver. 18, were it not really a *Most Exalted One*, or a *Most Mighty One*, namely Yahvé himself, the Hero-God, ver. 21, who hurls them down and for ever humbles their pride, vv. 33, 34, comp. vv. 17, 18; ix. 18; ii. 9; “Zech.” xi. 1, 3. The vivid description of the enemy falls of itself in conformity with the phenomena of the march into three parts: (1) he comes rapidly from the north-east over the Yordan, enters at ‘Aiyath Yuda’s territory, and soon sends his baggage by another way, that he may surprise Jerusalem more quickly, ver. 28; (2) while he is coming on the first day as far as Géba’, all the neighbouring places tremble, one place has to proclaim the terrible news to another as it were in responsive chorus (for what they have to do is to flee as quickly as they can), already all are in the greatest confusion, and carry off whatever they can get away, vv. 29-31; (3) yet he hastens on the second day as rapidly as he can still further, must before this day is gone rest at Nob, near Jerusalem, in order that on the third day he may attack it early, yea, already he sees the Sanctuary, and swings his hand threateningly against it, ver. 32. To fully understand the description, it would be necessary to know accurately the position of the various places mentioned therein; a contribution towards the fuller knowledge has now been made by E. Robinson, *Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, Vol. ii. p. 354 sq., and in his two well-known works, *Biblical Researches*. It is clear from the context that Yesaya is here describing a future march as his imagination depicts it;



the perfect tense prevails merely to produce greater vividness of description. But the fact that he could describe this future march with such particularity and accuracy, is fully explained only when we suppose that he had experienced similar marches in the past; the imagination is only able to expand and intensify what has already been presented to the mind, but cannot weave pictures that have never come within the range of experience and perception. However, we saw, xxii. 1-14, that the Assyrians had on a former occasion made incursions as far as the gates of Jerusalem.

4. xi. 1-9. After this great decision, when, as is said x. 20-23, the longed-for return and reformation of those in the community who are spared from the judgment has taken place, the blessed time will be possible in all its glory, and with it the coming of the Messiah. From the ancient stem of Davîd, which is now fallen very low, a new green branch as from the hidden ineradicable roots of a trunk will vigorously shoot forth (acc. vii.-ix. 6), upon whom Yahvé's spirit constantly rests, that spirit which looked at with reference to its nature is the spirit of wisdom and reason, looked at with reference to its activity is the spirit which adopts secure counsel in every case and then executes it, looked at with reference to its motives and ends is the spirit of knowledge and the fear of Yahvé, and in the triple alliance of true theory, practice and religion includes everything and is able to attain all divine ends, vv. 1, 2. If then this spirit rests upon him, he lives and moves every moment in the fear of Yahvé alone, as in the common and necessary air he breathes, not therefore in following the lusts of his own flesh and his own personal desires and passions: which in his capacity of judge forthwith manifests itself therein, that he dispenses justice and gives to the oppressed their right not according to what pleases his eyes or his ears, but only according to what is just and equitable before Yahvé; whilst he himself by all this possesses such inward divine strength, that but a bare word from him affects



the resisting, unholy earth like the strongest blow of a ruler's sceptre, and a mere breath from his mouth slays like a pestilence the wicked, he therefore has no need at all of those weapons with which unjust and inefficient rulers have to protect their government, inasmuch as his best preparations for battle are justice and faithfulness themselves, vv. 3-5. But the further consequence of this must be a marvellous growth of peace and prosperity: all the savage and wild things of the earth cast off their destructiveness (which may already be seen everywhere as true culture advances), even the wild animals become as tame as grazing cattle and a child that is hardly weaned stretches out its hand in play to seize the flashing eyes and beautiful feelers of poisonous snakes without receiving injury, vv. 6-8. Sinners (in one word) will finally not be found in Ssion, because the knowledge of Yahvé is then no longer dim and weak as is now the case, but as inexhaustible as the profoundest ocean-deeps themselves, Hab. ii. 14.

5. But once more to the starting-point! As the discourse started from the foreign relations of the nation, it must return to them. Outside the sacred land itself, this *root*, or new root-sprout (liii. 2), of the ancient trunk is celebrated and honoured far and wide on account of such virtues, standing as an exalted banner to which the eyes of all Heathen are directed, to which they flock, seeking from it oracles and decisions, ver. 10, following ii. 2-4. But the prosperity which thus becomes possible must according to the circumstances of the time assume successively the following forms: (1) with regard to the numerous prisoners which had been led away captive into all quarters of the earth, Yahvé will cause his mighty hand again to redeem all who shall have survived the time of punishment, as formerly in Egypt, by showing to the Heathen an exalted banner which they must acknowledge and fear, namely, the Messiah as had been said, ver. 10, on account of whom the Heathen release all his fellow countrymen so that they are able to collect together again from the dispersions in

the holy land, vv. 11, 12. The two principal tribes may therefore continue to exist side by side, without the conquest of the one by the other: but, and that is—(2) further necessary as the next stage, the mutual jealousy and enmity between them, which has been the cause of so many of the evils that have hitherto arisen (and especially the recent destruction of Samaria) must cease, ver. 13, so that then further—(3) as in David's time, with united forces all the nations which since David's time belong rightfully to the kingdom submit themselves again on the west and the east, ver. 14. (The *shoulders* of the Philistines is primarily the strip of coast belonging to this people which rises from the sea, but in this connexion the phrase is also taken figuratively from the eagle as it flies with its prey upon its shoulder, and thus shows its power over it, comp. Abulfeda's *Historia anteislamica*, pp. 84-5; *a seizure of their hand i.e.*, subject to them, so that they can use them as owners use whatever belongs to them, which they have merely to seize).—And to come back finally more directly to Assyria and Egypt of which so much was said above, and which as they are at present constituted seem to present the greatest obstacles to the realisation of such a picture, all that remains to be said is, that neither are they able to hinder Yahvé's work: a wrathful word from him suffices to curse the Red Sea, a threat of his hand with a burning, withering breath of his anger is all that is required so to chastise the Euphrates that it separates into seven small fordable streams, and thus for the greater portion of the captives, namely, those led into the Assyrian territory beyond the Euphrates, as easy a return will be made as formerly for their forefathers from Egypt, vv. 15, 16, "Zech." x. 11.

The passage xii. 1-6, with its two snatches of hymns, cannot be by Yesaya: words, figures, turns of thought, as well as the entire matter and spirit, are not Yesaya's, which is so evident that further proof would be superfluous. Besides, the foregoing discourse is of itself quite complete and finished; it only

loses some of its beauty and force by this addition. The tone and style of the passage point clearly to the period immediately succeeding the work, "Isa." xl-lxvi. and it is possible that at that time a copyist or reader, who beheld with joy a fulfilment of the words xi. 15, 16, in the deliverance from the Babylonian exile, supplemented the oracle of Yesaya with these jubilant words; see further on the passage, Vol. I. p. 95 sq. The connexion was easily enough established, although the very first words, which were at that time quite common, *and thou singest on that day*, are not in the style of Yesaya. Ver. 2 is from Ex. xv. 2.

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x. 5. The second verse-member is literally, acc. § 351 *a*, *and thou rod which is in their hand, i.e. who brandish it, as my wrath*, or my punishment. According to the well-known Hebrew idiom the last words might also be construed *as the (rod) of my wrath*. It is true that then there is a slight change of the thought as it was most simply expressed in the first member, and recurs again in the last words of this strophe, ver. 15 *b*: but such a variation accords well with the structure of the verse-members, and the same turn of the thought occurs again, 24 sq.; nor is there any reason for considering the words **הוא בידם** to be a later addition. It should be remembered, moreover, that the words which have been inserted in Yesaya's books by subsequent hands are of an entirely different character, see Vol. I. p. 88 sq.

On the tenses of **וְאֶסִּיר** and **וְאֶרִיד**, ver. 13, with which **וְשֹׁשְׁנֵי** alternates according to rule, see § 343 *b*. The reading **כְּבִיר** in this verse would signify *the most powerful of the Rulers*: but in this connexion, where the numerous individual kingdoms and rulers are spoken of, that would yield a poor sense; and as poetry the *K'thīb* **כְּתִיב**, *i.e. as a celestial being*, as a God, comp. i. 24; Ps. lxxviii. 25, harmonises much better with the whole context.

*As when a sick man sickeneth away*, is a somewhat free

rendering, to permit the reproduction of the assonance, ver. 18. [Cheyne has: "Like the sinking of strength in sickness."]

If the word **על**, ver. 27, is considered to signify a *yoke*, we must suppose that there is in the words *for* (acc. § 353 *a*) *ruined is the yoke by fat* an allusion to the fact, that even in the case of the common yoke-ox, the fatter and more powerful he becomes, so much the more easily is his yoke broken by the expanding force that fills it, so that it may therefore be the same in the case of the nation which is at present enslaved as it grows more powerful. However, according to the common view of the prophets, a yoke of this kind is rather *broken* or *removed* by God himself in a moment. Since, then, Yesaya employs many paronomasiæ in this part of his discourse, it seems more probable that he alludes in the word *fat* to ver. 16, and in **על** to **על**, and that **על** is only a slight variation of the vocalisation **על**, comp. *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.*, VI. p. 108. The use of the word **הַיָּל** would accord better with this supposition, xxxii. 7; Mic. ii. 10; Job xvii. 1. Only it must especially be remembered that the phrase becomes plain only on the supposition that it is the application in this place of a well-known proverb.

In the translation scarcely any attempt has been made to render the numerous paronomasiæ which are used, vv. 28-32, to give life to the list of dry geographical names; comp. Vol. I. p. 70. Probably a paronomasia is intended also, ver. 30, between **הָיָל** and **גַּלִּים** or *Gālîm*. Instead of **עֲנִיָּה** "*unhappy* is Anathôth," it is better to read with the LXX. **עֲנִיָּה**, preserving the symmetry of the small sentences of the context.

It is easy to perceive that the true God is called, ver. 21, the *Hero-God*, and ver. 34, the *Majestic One*, that he may be placed in direct opposition to the Assyrian monarch with his ambition to rule the world. And since the first name in ver. 21 is used in the closest connexion with the Messianic force of the name Sheâr-Yashûb, *ante*, p. 75, Yesaya intends it to refer back to the



words concerning the Messiah, ix. 5; but it does not follow from this that he is not thinking, in ver. 21, of Yahvé himself, since it is to him that all that is said, ver. 20, and has further to be said, vv. 33, 34, refers, and the Messiah is not brought forward before the following strophe, ch. xi. For that the Messiah could not come at once was felt at that time more deeply by Yesaya than formerly, and he indicates this clearly, xi. 1, when he describes him as appearing at first but as a very young shoot from the Davîdic trunk in its weather-beaten condition: the Davîdic kingdom as it then was must therefore first fall into ruin. *The Root of Ishaï* is then, xi. 10, the briefest expression of this expectation, since the young shoot of an old weather-beaten tree is itself at first but a kind of root, comp. Arab. *asl* Lebîd M. ver. 21 (?).

On חַיָּל, ver. 9, see § 292 *e*. The חַר, ver. 8, is a place through which the light penetrates, *window*, Cant. v. 4; hence, in the case of men, the hole of the eye, Zech. xiv. 12; and can thus in the case of snakes very well signify their windows, *i. e.* eyes, or also their feelers, just as מַאֲרָה instrument of light = eye.

xi. 11. עוֹר יִיָּן is briefly said for *Yahvé* יִיָּן.—Of foreign countries 7-8 are named here again (comp. Vol. I. p. 319), at the head of them Assyria and Egypt, as that age demanded, and from them the series returns by the south and east to the north and west, completing the circuit. On פְּתָה, ver. 14, see § 290 *e*.

*The citizeness Ssion*, xii. 6, is but one of the numerous new names which gradually grew up from the poetical one of *daughter Ssion*, Vol. I. p. 184: according to all appearances, Mikha, i. 11-15, was the first to introduce it; it was not commonly repeated, as in the present instance, before the time of Yéremyá, xlvi. 19; xlviii. 18, 19. The introduction of lyrics and pieces of lyrics, as well as the rapid transition from prophetic words to them, is a characteristic of the later prophets.

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## 2. THE ORACLE CONCERNING ETHIOPIA.

Ch. xvii. 12—xviii. 7; xiv. 24—27.

These two pieces, which are now separated, were probably originally connected in such a way that the second piece formed the conclusion; at all events in point of meaning their connexion yields all that can be desired, and we obtain then an oracle complete in itself. It is true that xviii. 1-7 would form a long strophe of a kind frequently met with in Yesaya's writings, so that we might suppose that we have here simply fragments of one or more longer orations: but the very excellent sense which arises from the connexion as we have above taken it, speaks against that possibility. The words, xvii. 12-14, which plainly belong to this later period, cannot be supposed to form a distinct piece, and fit excellently into ch. xviii. The other half strophe, xiv. 24-27, may have got displaced into its present position, because the later prophet, to whom we owe the Oracle concerning Babylon, xiii. 2—xiv. 23, desired to make it really the basis of his own piece; it is at all events more improbable that it formed the original conclusion to ch. xi., since the piece, ch. x. 5—xi., is a whole complete in itself, and, in fact, a somewhat different tone and style of discourse prevails in the passage before us: to which must be added, that no piece of Yesaya's has in direct succession above five strophes (iii. 16 is a marked subsection, in the same way as xxxii. 9).

The piece falls clearly only a short time later than the preceding piece. The main thoughts of the foregoing long oracle concerning the Assyrians recur here on a new occasion in almost exactly the same way, merely being put with greater brevity and precision. It appears from xviii. 1 that ambassadors had arrived at Jerusalem from the distant Ethiopia, for the purpose of observing on the spot the state of Assyrian and Hebrew affairs, certainly also to offer to the Hebrews help and an alliance against the Assyrians (comp. above on xiv. 32, p. 135). It follows also from xxxvii. 9, comp. Strab. l. xv.

*ad in.*, that this took place a short time before the fall of Sancherib. The prophet could not think or speak disdainfully with regard to this offer: for the Ethiopians, a people of good repute generally amongst the nations of antiquity, could not be by any means regarded by the Hebrews with the same suspicion as the Egyptians were. Still he could not approve from the Divine point of view: for here also he felt the force of the principle, that true help could not come in this external way, and that the Sanctuary of Yahvé would be preserved by Yahvé himself. According to ch. xxix it had already become an established conviction in his mind, that the Assyrian would soon fall by the Divine righteousness, that he would fall precisely at the temple of Yahvé, or, as is here more generally said, in the holy land. Well, then, the Ethiopians and other Heathen, that is the conclusion and the new prophetic thought, may rather look for the speedy fall of the Assyrian in the holy land without their assistance, and in that way become acquainted with the true power and greatness of Yahvé and learn to do him homage, which all lies in the Divine plan! and the ambassadors may proclaim everywhere the speedy overthrow of the Assyrian! When the eternal hope, notwithstanding all the storms which at the present shake the world, has, therefore, been powerfully presented at the opening, xvii. 11-14, Yesaya utters, as the central fact of the entire piece and the original element of it, his oracle concerning the Ethiopians, withholding from them no honour or commendation, and yet sacrificing nothing of the higher dignity of Yahvé, xviii. 1-3, 4-6, 7, and concludes with the strongest reiteration of the truth concerning the Assyrian, xiv. 24-27, as the plainest declaration of his opinion. *Comp. Gött. Gel. Anz.*, 1834, p. 914 sq.

The plan of the piece is therefore similar to that of another prophet, which was explained Vol. I., pp. 325 sq.

## XVII.

12 O murmur of many peoples, which murmur

like the murmuring of seas | and roar of nations  
 which roar like the roar of mighty waters ! ||  
 Nations roar as many waters roar : | but if He  
 rebuketh him, he fleeth afar off, | and becometh as  
 chaff of the mountains before the wind, and as a  
 dust-whirl chased before a storm. || Towards  
 evening—behold mortal-terror : before the dawn  
 —he is gone ; that is the portion of them who  
 plunder us, and the lot of them that rob us. ||

## XVIII.

- 1        O land of winged boats, which art along  
 the rivers of Kûsh ; || which sendest ambas-  
 sadors by the sea, and in reed-ships over the  
 waters' face ! | —go ye swift messengers to  
 the nation tall and nimble, to the people  
 dreaded since it arose until now, | the nation  
 of great power and conquest, whose land  
 rivers divide : || “all ye inhabitants of the  
 world and dwellers on the earth ! | if one  
 raiseth an ensign of the mountains behold ye,  
 and if one bloweth the trumpet hear ye !” ||  
 — For thus said Yahvé to me : I will rest  
 and look on in my station, | as sultry heat  
 above sunshine, as dew-clouds in harvest-  
 5        heat ! || For before the harvest when the  
 blossom is over, and the flower becometh a  
 ripening grape, | he cutteth the branches with  
 pruning-knives, and the shoots he heweth  
 away ; || they will be left together to the  
 eagles of the mountains and to the wild-  
 beasts of the land, | and the eagles summer

upon it, and all wild beasts of the earth winter upon it. || — In that time homage will be brought unto Yahvé of Hosts by the people tall and nimble, and by the people dreaded since it arose until now, | the nation of great power and conquest, whose land rivers divide, | to the place of the name of Yahvé of Hosts, the mount Ssion. ||

#### XIV.

24 Yahvé of Hosts sweareth thus : | Verily as I have thought it so it cometh to pass, and as I have counselled it that will stand : || that I break Assur in my land, and subdue him upon my mountain, | in order that his yoke may depart from them, and his burden depart from their shoulders ! || This is the counsel which is counselled over all the earth, | and this the hand which is stretched out over all Heathen ! || for Yahvé of Hosts hath counselled it, and who will break it ? | and his hand is that which is stretched out, and who will hinder it ? ||

1. Everywhere is now heard the uproarious noise of the nations, like the dashing of the sea, ver. 12, comp. Ps. xlvi. 3, 7; lxxv. 8 : but let them roar—a stern word from Him is sufficient to chase the Assyrian far away, ver. 13, a single night is enough for utterly annihilating him, in the evening a fatal alarm sent from Yahvé—and he has vanished before the morning has dawned ! ver. 14, comp. Ps. xlvi. 6. The sing. masc., into which there is a rapid change when the enemy is spoken of, vv. 13, 14, points of itself to the Assyrian as the great object so much spoken of in those days ; this is, however, a peculiarity of the oracle before us, comp. xviii. 6 b.

2. xviii. 1-3. This truth that the Assyrian will very shortly

fall in the holy land by the hand of Yahvé, and that a tremendous event is impending, let the Ethiopians give heed to, let the messengers, which this nation with its marvellously rapid movements has now sent to Jerusalem, proclaim when they return thence, wherever they go calling to all to attend carefully to the next signal of alarm which will be given in the distance (ver. 3, comp. xiii. 2; v. 26; xi. 12): it is the signal that the great event which the prophet here foretells has taken place in the holy land, the event which the following words immediately elucidate, vv. 4-6. Thus the extraordinary and distant nation, which sends its messengers with such rapidity in Papyrus-boats over the Nile, may even serve to spread more quickly the fame of Yahvé; nothing seems therefore at this moment more important to the prophet than precisely its rapidity of movement, he calls it accordingly at the commencement a nation of boats with wings, possessing winged ships, comp. xi. 14, a nation which although it dwells along the rivers of Ethiopia, *i.e.*, very far off, can yet send very rapid messengers and other things by means of its light Nile-boats of Papyrus (Job ix. 26; *scholia* to Lucian's *De dea Syra*, cap. vii., Heeren's *Historische Werke* part xiv. p. 374; Layard's *Discoveries* p. 552; Heuglin in *Ausland* for 1857, p. 1185). For though at the present moment it seems as if Yahvé will calmly look on from his station in heaven, and wait for the proper time, yet it is really as when, in the hottest summer days at the approaching harvest, sultry heat with bright dew-clouds for a long time hangs over the sunshine: the sultry heat will not subside, rain will not come, but unexpectedly a tempest arises and then causes the greater destruction. For this tempest, as is said to limit the time, ver. 5, must burst before the harvest; the Assyrians have already such a position that little remains for them to attempt, their grapes are just about to ripen: nevertheless before they ripen Yahvé will destroy the entire vineyard, so completely cut off the proud and luxuriant branches and vines that they lose the harvest; thus, ver. 5, there is a rapid change to the



new figure of cutting off with the sickle (acc. Joel iv. 13, comp. xvii. 10, 11); and the next verse, ver. 6, immediately explains that this divine sickle casts to the ground a mighty army of men, which is so immensely great that the birds and beasts of prey feast upon its carcases a whole year or more, comp. Ps. lxxvi. 13. But then the honoured nation of the Ethiopians may and will at last bring its homage to the place where the *name* of Yahvé, who has done these things, is called upon and resides, ver. 7.

3. Yea, the Assyrian (here plainly mentioned for the first time), shall fall in the holy land, the discourse continues, returning to its commencement; with the most sacred oath this is here declared, and who will be able to hinder it? xiv. 24-28, comp. xviii. 3, and ix. 3; x. 27; v. 25; vii. 7; viii. 10. These verses have completely the appearance of being the conclusion of a larger whole: they cannot form an independent oracle, because neither the Assyrian nor Israel is addressed. In view of this peculiarity also it has the appearance of being the conclusion to the foregoing piece, in which the language and the thoughts bear upon a third party—the Ethiopians.

xviii. 1-7. מֵעֵבֶר is in this place *along*, properly *opposite*, as all such land in general lies opposite the rivers, just as Josh. xii. 7, יַמָּה — בְּעֵבֶר *over against* the Yordan *towards the West*, *i.e.*, westward of the Yordan; whilst when the land which lies beyond a river is alone intended, it is more distinctly described as situated *on the other side, beyond*; but our word can never signify that which lies on *this side*, or the opposite of what is on *that side*, (comp. *Jahrbb. der Bibl. Wiss.* VII. p. 211 sq; Origen on Matt. xxiv. 10 (tom. iii. p. 858, ed. Delarue), it is true, explains the Ethiopians *beyond the river* to mean only that they were the most distant people of this name). Who are in the prophet's mind he himself explains at the end: "whose land streams divide." The translation "land of *fluttering*

of wings," *i.e.*, of fluttering wings, rapidly arriving at a place, would supply a partial interpretation of the word **לצל**; but since the LXX, although they did not understand the whole passage, nevertheless translated the word by *πλοῖα*, as if they had a clear knowledge of its force, since further the Arab. *az-zolzol*, Qam. p. 1495, is explained by *as-sufun* and the root *salla* in Ethiopic is actually used of *swimming* wood, the signification of *ships*, which suits the context best, is without doubt the true one: they must have been, however, a special kind of small ships or boats. In respect of its radicals (§. 49 *b*) the Arab. *kalkal*, (hence the more modern *kelek*) in Edrîsi 3, 5 under Qolzum, is related.—It appears from the opening that the ambassadors which are to go to the distant nation had been sent by the nation itself. The nation is described in terms of deserved respect: (1) *tall* (lit. *extended*), which was true of the Ethiopians, xlv. 14; Herod. iii. 20, 114, and yet *nimble*, not sluggish, but as is proved by their ships very quick and agile, comp. Arab. *amrat*, smooth, light, nimble, *Notices et Extr.* tom. xii. p. 644; (2) *dreaded* by other nations *since it is*, since its origin, *and further*, until now, §. 297 *c*; (3) a nation of *great power and trampling* that can subdue whatever it desires, which again is in agreement with the descriptions which the Ancients give of the Ethiopians, Herod. iii. 17-25; and (4) whose land is divided by *streams*, which is also a great advantage in southern countries, while with this particular the description comes back to its commencement, ver. 1.

On ver. xviii. 7*a*. On account of the similarity of the details of the description we must conclude that **יְהוָה** has fallen out before **עַל**, as elsewhere **עַל** and **יְהוָה** alternate with the verse-members.

### 3. THE TYPICAL WARNING FOR EGYPTIANS AND ETHIOPIANS.

#### ch. xx.

It may be easily imagined that Yesaya often spoke with reference to the trust in Egypt as we have heard him, xxx. 1-7;

xxxi. 1-3. He would do this at all times and on every occasion both openly and by signs. For the hankering after such an alliance which the people in Jerusalem could not let go, received fresh encouragement from Ethiopia, inasmuch as this kingdom, which was at that time very powerful and comprehended the south of Egypt (comp. above on xxx. 4), was no less than Egypt alarmed at the progress of Assyria, and still more energetically than Egypt prepared for war against it, comp. ch. xviii.—When, therefore, the Assyrian king Sargon, who is mentioned here, ver. 1, only, and probably succeeded Salmanassar soon after the fall of Samaria, sent his general Tartan (2 Kings xviii. 17) against the Philistine city Ashdôd, a very strong fortress and the key to Egypt, Yesaya not only anticipated its fall, but also that the Assyrians soon after the capture of the border fortress would carry devastation into Africa itself. This was what no one in Jerusalem would seriously believe. But it seemed to Yesaya that they would in the city soon witness a new spectacle, that they would see African captives led into it in triumph by the Assyrians, to the no small terror of the magnates of Jerusalem who were trusting in Africa; it appeared to him thus although the siege was prolonged through three years (just as later Psammetich besieged the same fortress for a period of twenty-nine years, Herod. ii. 157). He was very unwilling to speak further openly upon the matter; during that time he appeared publicly only in the garb of a captive, without mantle or shoes, in order that all who were struck by his strange appearance might receive a hint of something new which lay in the mind of Yahvé and was about to take place, as the prophet foresaw in his own soul and prefigured in his person as the commencement of the thing itself. But when the fortress was taken, and the fulfilment of his anticipation accordingly drew much nearer, and when the prefiguration which the prophet had given without speaking had accomplished its end, the spirit then urged him to speak plainly concerning the matter, with the view of

afresh exposing the folly of trusting in Africa and especially in Egypt, as had been more particularly explained in the foregoing piece.

If we knew in what year Ashdôd was captured, we should be able to determine the exact date of this piece. Or if Egypt only had been spoken of, we might have supposed that it was originally an appendix to the previous book, ch. xxviii.-xxxii., designed to prove in another form what was there said. But since the Ethiopians also, of which there was not a word said, ch. xxviii.-xxxii., are mentioned, and moreover, according to ver. 4, with greater honour than the Egyptians, we consider the piece belongs more properly to this book; and as a fact it is separated from xvii. 12—ch. xviii. merely by the later introduction of the piece, ch. xix.

## XX.

- 1 In the year when Tartan came to Ashdôd, sent by Sargon the king of Assyria, (and he besieged Ashdôd then and took it): || in that time Yahvé spake by Yesaya the son of 'Amôss thus: "Go and loose the prophet's mantle from thy loins, | and thy shoe draw off from thy foot!" || and he did so, went naked and barefoot. || — Then said Yahvé: As my servant Yesaya hath gone naked and barefoot three years, | as a sign and a portent concerning Egypt and concerning Kûsh: || so will the king of Assur lead away naked and barefoot the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Kûsh, youths and old men; | while those bared at
- 5 the buttocks are the shame of Egypt. || Then will they be alarmed and ashamed of Kûsh their hope, and of Egypt their boast, || and the inhabitant of this coast saith on that day: behold so fareth

our hope to which we fled for help to save us from the king of Assur : | and how should we escape ! ||

It is a merely prefatory remark, ver. 1, and made in order to dismiss the narrative concerning Tartan, that he took the city after a siege, which is subsequently, ver. 3, said to have lasted three years, whilst ver. 2 returns to the commencement of ver. 1. Yet the complete understanding of the subsequent verses, ver. 3 sq., is assisted by the knowledge of the fact that the siege was finally successful. We had a similar case above, vii. 1.—The prophet's mantle, beneath which nothing more was worn than a short undergarment, or shirt, is called, ver. 2, a *saq*, because like the mourning garment it was made of coarse black hair, comp. Zech. xiii. 4 ; Matt. iii. 4 ; Rev. xi. 3 ; whoever wears nothing more than a shirt is in ordinary language said to be naked.—The second member of ver. 4 is clearly intended to express something which has very special reference to the Egyptians, who, acc. ch. xviii., were considered to be much more contemptible and base in the estimation of the world than were the Ethiopians ; it must therefore be taken as a special sentence describing how the Egyptians were led captive in a still more lamentable and humiliating manner than the Ethiopians. The captives belonging to a wealthier and superior nation may very well make a better appearance with regard to behaviour and clothing even in captivity. The general, somewhat contemptuous use of *they*, or *one*, with which Yesaya really means the magnates of Jerusalem, is peculiar to this prophet, as is also the similarly disdainful appellation, *this people*, ver. 5 ; i. 29 ; xxxi. 6 ; xxviii. 7. But when Yesaya immediately speaks, ver. 6, of the inhabitants of *this coast*, it follows from the entire force and context of this and all other oracles, that he especially intends thereby really the magnates of Jerusalem again, yet inasmuch as the remaining inhabitants of the coast of Palestine, the Phœnicians and Philistines who



were not less oppressed by the Assyrians, might also share this hope, Yesaya was able to use a more general word here, the immediate reference of which was not obscure.

On שִׁיבָהּ, ver. 4, see § 211 *c*.

## APPENDAGE. THE ASSYRIAN AND JERUSALEM.

### Ch. xxxiii.

The following oration really belongs to the last times of the trial which befell Jerusalem from the Assyrians, 711 B.C. Sancherib, who was also probably exposed to considerable danger from Africa, in anger determined no longer to spare Jerusalem. The ambassadors whom Hizqia had sent with petitions for mercy to Sancherib, as he was occupying the remaining fortresses of the land one after another, had been repulsed although their rich presents had been received, and it could no longer be concealed that the Assyrians intended not simply to humiliate Hizqia as they had done before, but to drive him from his throne and occupy Jerusalem as a military post of their own after they had led away captive its strongest inhabitants, vv. 7, 8; 2 Kings xviii. 14-17. But in proportion as the Assyrians became violent and insolent and everything approached the climax of a terrible crisis, the prophetic voice was raised against them as well as against all the unrighteous powers of the earth, and the nearer and more certain was the approach of a great judgment upon all the injustice of the earth foreseen to be; from the midst of earnest cries to Yahvé for help in this terrible time, the threat against the prevailing injustice and the hope of deliverance and Messianic blessedness arise with the greater strength, and precisely in such moments of the most extreme trial does it become most clear what an inexhaustible supply of enthusiasm and confidence was contained in the religion of Yahvé for its confessors even in those later days, comp. vv. 5, 6, 21-24. This is at least the case as

long as there is a zeal which is directed against their own shortcomings, as our prophet shows very forcibly vv. 13-16.

Inasmuch as the matter which the prophet intends to include within the limits of his oration has grown still more varied by the addition of the last named particular, it falls into five strophes of somewhat larger size than common, the last only forming a briefer conclusion. In the first the prophetic threat forthwith pours itself forth in a full stream, together with a prayer and remembrance of the eternal hope, vv. 1-6; but in the second, vv. 7-12, the prophet looks round about him and describes the hopeless condition of the affairs of the time, while as a flash of lightning there also darts through him the truth, that there lies in the impossibility of the long duration of these things the true pledge of the divine interference against all injustice, not merely the injustice of the distant heathen nations, but also, which the third strophe deals with, that close at hand, that which still prevails in Israel itself, vv. 13-16; till the oration after it has thus poured forth its violent feeling in both directions, gives itself up in the last two strophes to hope and calm, cheerful confidence in Yahvé vv. 17-24.

Whether, however, Yesaya himself wrote the oration is very doubtful: though much of it as regards single words and its entire spirit reminds us of Yesaya, other marks as strongly point to another author. Even in single words there are observable differences; the poetic style is sought rather in external characteristics, *e.g.*, in the use of particles **אֵף** ver. 2, **כִּי אֵם** ver. 21, **כֵּן** six times vv. 20-24\* which Yesaya does not use, in the use of **וַיִּשְׁעָה**, vv. 2, 6, the occurrence of which three times in ch. xii. is no proof that this chapter is by Yesaya, **אֲנִי**, ver. 8, notwithstanding viii. 1, etc. Equally different is the entire imagery which here meets the hearer. Still more perceptibly do we miss here the elevation and the brief but wonderfully forcible figurative language, in a word,

\* **כֵּן** which is only found xxxii. 19, is in any case different.

the majesty of Yesaya's style; even his long full sentences dwindle here into small detached and tripping ones; the character of the strophes also departs somewhat from his. And precisely the most characteristic words and thoughts of Yesaya, which he repeats everywhere else with an easy and pleasing variation, are not found here. We may most naturally suppose, therefore, that this was the oracle of one of Yesaya's disciples, which met with a similar treatment to that of ch. xxiii., belonging to another disciple, which found its way as an appendix into his fifth book.

## 1.

## XXXIII.

- 1 O devastator who art not yet devastated, and  
 thou robber who art not yet robbed: | as soon as  
 thou hast finished devastating thou wilt be devas-  
 tated, as soon as thou art at an end with robbing  
 thou wilt be robbed! || — Yahvé be gracious unto  
 us, in thee we hope, | be their arm every morning,  
 yea our help in time of need! || At the sounding  
 thunder nations flee, | at thy rising peoples are  
 scattered: || and your booty is gleaned away as  
 locusts glean away, | as grasshoppers run one  
 5 runneth thereupon. || — Exalted is Yahvé, for he  
 inhabiteth the height, | hath filled Ssion with justice  
 and righteousness, || so that the security of thy  
 times is a store of deliverances, of wisdom and in-  
 sight: | the fear of Yahvé — that is his treasure. ||

## 2.

Behold fearful cry without — | the ambassadors  
 of peace weep bitterly; || laid waste are the high-  
 ways, the wayfarer idleth; | he hath broken the

covenant, scorned cities despised men ; the earth  
 fadeth and faileth, Lebanon is ashamed and lan-  
 guishing, || Sharon hath become like the desert, and  
 10 Bashan and Karmel become bare. || — “ Now will  
 I arise ” saith Yahvé | “ now exalt myself, now  
 lift up myself ! || conceive ye dry sticks, ye bring  
 forth dry stubble : | your spirit is the fire that  
 devoureth you, || and nations become burnt lime, |  
 cut off thorns, kindled with fire ! ||

## 3.

Hear ye that are far off what I do, | and know  
 ye that are near my might ! || \* In Ssion sinners  
 tremble, a shaking seizeth the unholy : | “ who  
 will protect us from the devouring fire, who protect  
 15 us from the eternal burnings ? ” || He who  
 walketh justly and speaketh uprightly, | he who  
 despiseth the gain of oppressions, he who shaketh  
 his hands from taking a bribe, | he who stoppeth  
 his ear from hearing murder, and closeth his eyes  
 from beholding evil : || he will inhabit high places,  
 rock-fastnesses are his defence ; | his bread is given,  
 his water never faileth. ||

## 4.

The king in his glory will thine eyes behold, |  
 they will see a far-stretching land ; || thine heart  
 will muse on the terror : | “ where is he that  
 counted, where is he that weighed ? where is he  
 that counted the towers ? ” || The barbarian nation  
 shalt thou not see, | the nation of a dark inaudible  
 speech, of stammering tongue without sense. ||

20 Thou shalt behold Ssion as our festive city, | thine eyes shall see Jerusalem as a safe pasture, as a tent that roameth not | whose pins are never drawn out, and none of whose cords are ever rent: || but we have Yahvé there as a Majestic One, instead of broad rivers [and] streams, | wherethrough goeth no oared ship, neither passeth it a majestic fleet. ||

## 5.

For Yahvé is our judge, Yahvé our arbiter, | Yahvé our king: he will help us. || Thy ropes [O Ssion] hang slackly, they hold not the socket of their mast, they spread no flag: | yet then will robbed booty be divided abundantly, the lame take some plunder; || and no inhabitant saith "I am sick!" | the people that dwelleth therein is forgiven its sin. ||\*

1. The real truth concerning the Assyrian (although he will himself not see it) is, that he who continues without hindrance to rob and plunder incessantly, will find not only a limit put to his power to rob (and how quickly that may take place!), but as soon as he reaches this limit he will succumb to the same doom which he desires to prepare for all other nations, and which the enraged nations will turn against himself!—It is true, that in this dark time, while the commencement of that crisis is still invisible, almost the only thing that can be done to sustain the courage is prayer to Yahvé, ver. 2: but if it is true that at no time has any nation been able in its perversity to resist Yahvé's openly declared will and judgment, ver. 3. the divine thunder will smite the Assyrian also with terror at the proper moment, so that he will be an easy prey to those nations

\* Germ. : *ist vergebener schuld*, a close rendering of the Hebrew idiom. See §. 288 b, Gesenius §. 135.—Tr.



which he barbarously plundered, and which will then run upon him carrying off everything in greedy haste like locusts, ver. 4. And there is a second consolation in the fact, that Yahvé is not merely, as was said, ver. 3, exalted beyond all human injustice, but has also as a historical event established in Ssion a living fountain of justice, ver. 5 : yea, no other than that hidden, inexhaustible fulness of spiritual powers which are still ever active in Ssion, this precious treasure and resource supplies the best pledge of a favourable turn to be given to the present calamitous times, ver. 6. The repeated sudden change of person addressed is very uncommon, and is possible only when there is great agitation of feeling, ver. 1 ; vv. 2, 3 ; ver. 4 ; ver. 6.

2. What a scene presents itself on all hands ! Even the ambassadors which were sent to the Assyrian, with the humblest petitions and largest presents, to sue for peace, are weeping (having been rudely repulsed by the Assyrian), crying aloud for fear in the open streets, ver. 7 ; no one ventures to appear again in public (Judges v. 6), since the Assyrian acts in plainest defiance of all former treaties and promises, considering neither towns nor human life, ver. 8 ; yea, the whole land appears to faint away at such cruelties as it must be witness of, and its most verdant and blooming portions are destroyed as it were from terror ! ver. 9. It appears that the announcement of ver. 7 was the latest news that had been heard : and it is as if one heard immediately after the ambassador's mournful report regarding the entire condition of the land.—But it is precisely such a revelation of human injustice which most clearly shows the necessity of a speedy divine judgment ; now will Yahvé arise as in the days of old ! ver. 10, comp. Ps. xii. 6. If that which the Assyrians are now about, what they cherish in their inmost hearts and desire to carry out, is nothing sound and living, but like scorched dried grass, then that which they finally bring to pass must be like dry stubble, worthless stuff, which can withstand no fire, but will be devoured by it in a

moment, and their own ungodly spirit, their own aims and efforts, will be the fire to devour them, ver. 11, comp. i. 31; xxx. 13 (for the figure of the paronomasia, Ps. vii. 15; Job xv. 35): whole nations will be unable to withstand this devouring fire of trial and punishment, ver. 12, comp. 2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7; Amos ii. 1.

3. Not merely they who are afar off, the Assyrians and all Heathen, but also they who are near, the people of Jerusalem, must give heed to this threat, ver. 13. For in Ssion itself there are those who must tremble at the threat, or at least at the fire of the judgment when it comes, and already the prophet hears their trembling cry of lamentation, as they will then pray for protection and succour from the devouring, incessant fire, ver. 14. But the only answer that can be given to them is, that only he who keeps himself pure in his whole life and in every respect, enjoys the true eternal protection, as if he were in an impregnable and constantly well-supplied fortress, vv. 15, 16, according to Ps. xv. 2-5.

4. However, when these unhappy members of Ssion are put out of view, there remains in it an eternal, secure hope, which enables it calmly to anticipate the storms that now threaten it from without. Though King Hizkia is now deeply humiliated and his land is terribly overrun by the Assyrians, and its capital is threatened, yet the king will be seen in his glory and the land in all directions freed of its enemies, and lying open, ver. 17, and with a proportionally greater joy will men then remember the present time of terror, rejoicing that the Assyrian is no longer there who numbered the people, to determine the tribute, who rudely weighed the heavy tribute which had been brought (to see whether it was not too small, like Brennus at Rome), and counted the towers of the capital to see whether they were not too many, ver. 18, comp. Ps. xlviii. 13, 14; the nation of wild barbaric language and habits, with which a Hebrew could never have friendly intercourse, will not again be seen, ver. 19. On the other hand, Ssion shall be seen as our festive

city, visited from all sides and full of festal joy (comp. iv. 5), and as an abiding tent that does not move from place to place, ver. 20 ; and then we shall have Yahvé himself, as the All-Powerful One, in the redeemed and regenerated Ssion, a better defence than broad streams and trenches which surround the fortress ; if other cities have such fortifications, Nah. iii. 8, Ssion does not then need them, and possesses a bulwark over which no proud, hostile fleet can come, however dangerous it may be to other cities though they may be surrounded with mighty rivers, ver. 21, comp. Ps. xli. 5-8.

5. For Yahvé is ultimately our all, and our hope in him will not deceive, ver. 22 : if Ssion now is like a ship with slack and rent ropes, ruined by storms, without mast or flag, still a higher courage will then suddenly take possession of all hearts, even of those who are weak and sick ; a pure, sin-destroying spirit seizes all, and with a view to the immediate object—the victory over the robbers, vv. 23, 24, the discourse thus recurring at the end to its commencement, ver. 1 ; in other respects like Joel iii. 1 ; Ps. xxxii. 1.

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Ver. 1. The reading פְּנִלְתָּךְ might be retained if it could be shown that נִלָּה from נָלָה = Arab. *nāla* has the meaning of *to attain, to arrive at the end, to come to an end* : but it is safer to read פְּנִלְתָּךְ in this case also acc. § 244 b.

On ver. 7. Instead of אִרְאֶלֶם (which would be “if I look upon them,” and cannot be retained, because לֶהֱאִיר is never contracted into לֶאֱ, were there no other reasons against it), the punctuation should not be אִרְאֶלֶם “lion of God,” acc. xxix. 1, which strange expression would not accord with the character of the ambassadors of peace, but אִרְאֶלֶם as an adjective, § 162 b, from רָאָל = רָעַל Arab. *ra’ila*, *to fear*, a meaning which the LXX., although they had a very inadequate idea of the whole context, still kept the memory of ; the subject מַלְאכֵי שָׁלוֹם is not introduced before the commencement of the second member, as xxiii. 11 and elsewhere.

On ver. 14. גור to be host, = protector, helper, properly who will be to us a helper, *i.e.* keep from us the devouring fire, comp. Arab. *ajāra*; אש is like a second object, construed acc. § 283 b.

Ver. 19. נוֹעֵז, or rather נוֹעֵז, must be the same as לוֹעֵז, acc § 51 b, Ps. cxiv. 1, comp. Ez. iii. 5.

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*Final Words against the Assyrians.*

Ch. xxxvii. 22-35, comp. 2 Kings xix. 21-34.

Yesaya was otherwise very active even in this critical time; indeed his unshaken steadfastness, founded upon confidence in Yahvé, now first won its greatest victories and became a most powerful means of saving the whole kingdom. The former discourse proves with what unsubdued divine energy and purity of insight he met the Assyrians at the last moment, when threatened by the Africans they demanded with furious threats and taunts the surrender of Jerusalem: it also proves how by the same means he sustained the hope of both the sadly distressed king Hizqia and his people. The discourse before us is without doubt genuine, but not written down by Yesaya himself and placed by him in any of his books, but was only subsequently received into the state annals as it had been preserved in the memory of contemporaries. We find it, therefore, in such a form as would be dictated by the moment, without the customary division into strophes or other expenditure of art. After a somewhat lengthy exposition of what is to be said to the insolent demand of the Assyrians, vv. 22-29, the discourse is occupied with consoling Hizqia and his people, vv. 30-35.

### XXXVII.

22 Despiseth thee derideth thee the virgin daughter  
Ssion, | behind thee shaketh the head the daughter



- Jerusalem ! || — Whom hast thou reviled and blasphemed, and against whom lifted up thy voice, | that thou raisedst on high thine eyes, against Israel's Holy One ? || By thy messengers hast thou reviled the Lord, | that thou saidst : “ by the driving of my chariots I ascend the mountains' height, Lebanon's distant parts, | and hew down its tallest cedars, its best cypresses, and come to its utmost
- 25 lodging-place its fruitful forest ! || I dig and drink foreign water, | and dry with the tread of my sole all streams of the Land of Distress ! ” || — O hast thou not heard how long ago I made that, from the days of old how I created it ? | now have I brought it and it is—that I laid waste defenced cities into bare stone-heaps, || and their inhabitants with short arms were dismayed and ashamed, | became grass of the field and green herb, blades of the roofs and blight before the stalk cometh.— || But thy sitting down and going in and out I know, | and thy rage against me : || just because thy rage against me and thy godlessness is come into mine ears, | so I put my ring into thy nose and my bridle into thy lips, and bring thee back into the way in which thou camest.||
- 30 And this is to thee the sign : that ye eat this year what hath dropped out and in the next year what groweth of itself, | but in the third year sow ye and reap, and plant vineyards and eat their fruit ! || For the residue remaining of the house of Yuda striketh root downwards, | and beareth fruit upwards ; || for from Jerusalem will an aftergrowth go forth, and a residue from Mount Ssion : | the



zeal of Yahvé of Hosts will do this! || — Therefore thus saith Yahvé of the Assyrian king: he will not enter this city, nor shoot thither an arrow, | not advance against it a shield, nor throw up against it a rampart; || in the way which he came will he  
 35 return | and not enter this city, saith Yahvé, || and I protect this city to save it, | for mine own sake and for the sake of David my servant. ||

xxxvii. 22-29. Thou threatenest with the most insolent words the honoured, unconquered, and inviolate virgin-city, xxxvi. 8-10: but she, on the certainty that thou rather wilt soon be compelled to shamefully raise the siege, already derides thee, shaking her head in derision at thy retreat! ver. 22.— But with regard to the chief thing, thy many blasphemies of Yahvé as a powerless God, xxxvii. 7 sq., 15 sq., 10-13, I ask thee, *whom* has thou really reviled with thy blasphemous words against the Exalted One? ver. 23, comp. lvii. 4. Yes, thou hast, it is true, really reviled Yahvé by thy proud boasting, as if thou hadst accomplished all thy grand deeds by thine own power and attained thy desire, as if thou hadst ascended and laid in ruins by the mere driving of thy chariots the magnificent Lebanon, with its everlasting cedars, a mountain so hard to climb and to hold, the symbol of the entire glory of Kanáan (Hab. ii. 17), as if thou advancing further through the desert towards Africa wert able at thy pleasure to call up water from the earth in strange territory, and by the mere tread of thy soles to dry up all Egyptian waters as a punishment, vv. 24, 25, comp. x. 13, 14. And dost thou not at once perceive the grievous folly of all this? hast thou never heard the truth, that Yahvé alone, long ago in the ancient times, performed all that potentially in his mind, and has now caused it to come to pass actually? *he* commanded to destroy defenced cities, *e.g.* those mentioned vv. 12, 13, into waste heaps of ruins—

and forthwith it was done, and the people, abandoned by him, powerless and helpless, passed away rapidly like perishable grass, or as when the blight destroys the young corn while it is still standing! vv. 26, 27. But how little thy wretched anger and thy boasting injures Yahvé, thou wilt soon discover from the fact, that he who fully knows all thy inclinations and deeds, thy wrath against him and thy dreadfully impious carelessness (comp. xxxii. 9), will deal with thee as with a wild animal, will tame thee, and compel thee to retreat with thy purpose unattained! vv. 28, 29.

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Thus closely are vv. 23-29 connected with each other. Instead of עבדיך, ver. 24, 2 Kings has more correctly מלאכיה, acc. vv. 9, 10; instead of בָּרַב רָקְבִי it is better to read בָּרַכְב רָקְבִי “by the mere driving of my chariots,” for the smaller the expenditure of effort the expression indicates the better, as in the corresponding בָּכַף פָּעָמִי (which Wellsted, *Travels in Arabia*, Vol. I. p. 281 sq., explains erroneously). מָלוֹן, ver. 24, is also a better reading than the second מָרוֹם, and the addition of זָרִים, ver. 25, is indispensable. *Land of Distress*, a poetic adaptation of the Hebrew name for Egypt, which becomes current precisely at this period, xix. 6; Mic. vii. 12.

Vv. 30-35. The sign of the truth of the Messianic promise which Yesaya now gives without solicitation to the people, ver. 30, is very much like the previous one, vii. 14-16, and contains substantially the same idea, only that in the present case it is more closely connected with the existing condition of affairs. This year there is nothing but what has dropped out to eat, in the next year what has grown of itself, and in the third unhindered husbandry and the most splendid harvest! In this triple enigma lies the entire course of the immediate future, and in its truth a pledge from Yahvé of the future. The meaning of the enigma is evident. It must have then been autumn, and an autumn when no proper seed-sowing or garden-

ing could be reckoned upon, inasmuch as the Assyrian armies had occupied and devastated, or, in any case, thrown into a state of alarm, the whole land, so that in that year at most only a scanty harvest could be looked for from *what had dropped out*, i.e. of corn from the grains of the last harvest that had accidentally fallen; for the year following that the prophet is still without hope of complete quiet in the land, he might fear that the Assyrians would not so soon leave the land entirely, and besides, according to the prevailing prophetic conception, a great change must first take place in the people themselves, a decisive separation and destruction of the wicked, which is not possible without a still more severe national calamity; and as the seventh fallow year must be succeeded by a further year of fallow, the same is necessary for the restoration of the state to its true condition, a figure which was evidently in the mind of our prophet (comp. *Alterthümer*, p. 502 (424), accordingly he anticipated in this far more important case a second year would pass without tillage, in which therefore only what grows of itself (*freigewachsen*) could be eaten, in patient expectation on the part of the few who had grown equal to the severe trial, until a small number of regenerated ones, after the destruction of all that was unsound and corrupt in the state had taken place, should begin from the third year a new and blessed life, and the Messianic age should commence at Ssion in accordance with the ancient promises, as the prophet, vv. 31, 32, himself explains in his usual manner, comp. ix. 5, 6. The application to the case under consideration follows naturally, vv. 33-35; with which the discourse comes back to the point from which it started, ver. 22 sq. However unhappy life may be during the next two years, people will manage to subsist until the happier time, and Ssion, whence that time must proceed, cannot be destroyed, nay, cannot be even seriously besieged!

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## VII. YESAYA'S LAST BOOK.

### THE CONVERSION OF THE EGYPTIANS AND THE HEATHEN GENERALLY.

#### Ch. xix.

Accordingly Yesaya witnessed the overthrow of the Assyrian supremacy and the restoration of his country; he saw the grand and glorious times, with the anticipation of which his heart had expanded, the ideal description of which he had so often eloquently sketched, and the possibility of which his own faithful and persistent labours had prepared. And although the fulfilment of the prophetic hope was not at that time quite so perfect as the prophet had desired and foreseen in the forecastings of his heart, and the appearance of the Messiah especially and the consummation of the divine kingdom were delayed, still a great illustration of the divine rule in history had been again given, many wrongs had been redressed, and confidence in the final fall of all heathenism and in the omnipotence of the spiritual God of Ssion had been restored. Comp. *Dichter des Alten Bundes*, I b, p. 132 sq. 3rd. ed.

In the oracle concerning Egypt, ch. xix., we possess a very important memorial of the later life of Yesaya. The piece presents some few peculiarities which do not occur in the previous pieces (the particle  $\text{אִם}$  ver. 11, comp. however, xvi. 7; the orthography,  $\text{סִפָּר}$  ver. 17 instead of  $\text{הִפָּר}$ , §. 173 b, comp. however, the earlier instance, Num. xi. 20); and the entire discourse suffers from a prolixity of expression quite unusual by Yesaya, instead of starting with sudden energy and rolling on in a bold and compressed stream. At the same time, we have here in all other respects the peculiar language, expressions, and thoughts of this unique prophet so clearly present, that there is no reason to doubt its origin from Yesaya, and the somewhat less brilliant colouring of the whole

piece, the subdued fire of the oratory, must be ascribed simply to the considerably greater age of the prophet.

The historical indications also point to a considerably later period as the date of this piece. It shows no trace of the Assyrian supremacy; and although the internal dissensions in Egypt at that time would have supplied the best opportunity for an Assyrian invasion, and Yesaya would, therefore, in any earlier oracle have threatened the Egyptians with the approach of the Assyrians still more than he did in ch. xx., yet here Assyria is not represented as even distantly dangerous to Egypt. It is true Assyria is significantly mentioned vv. 23-25: but not at all as in earlier pieces: it is here humbled and no longer far from repentance and the knowledge of Yahvé. On the other hand, the humiliation of Assyria already appears to belong to a somewhat distant past. We may, therefore, reasonably suppose that an interval of ten years has occurred between the last of the previous pieces and that before us.

Unhappily the *data* which would be most decisive for the view to be taken of this piece, the details of the history of Egypt at that time, are not at hand. The piece pre-supposes dangerous internal commotions, revolts, and difficulties in Egypt: in their causes at all events these must have been the same as those of which the Greeks give some accounts, the movements under the Priest-King Sethôs, the Dodekarchy, Her. ii. 141, 147, 151; Diod. i. 66: but the detailed accounts of the time in which Yesaya could speak as he does are wanting.

But it cannot be doubtful how a prophet ought to treat such an event as that of the threatening internal struggles and calamities of Egypt, and what hopes it must create in him at a time when his own country is externally victorious and prosperous. If the ancient land of science and philosophy, which nevertheless still holds fast to the folly of the most varied idolatry and superstition, was visited with serious dangers, if its entire condition, both its moral condition as a state and



(which, as the ancients conceived, is very closely connected therewith) its material condition, was most profoundly convulsed, and was in danger of dissolution, the prophet obtained a gleam of light to irradiate the gloom from the fact alone, that he conceived the eternal, true, great Spirit, Yahvé, as at work here also, with a view to destroy by his power ancient error and strikingly to make the nation which was in its wisdom led astray attend to his eternal truth. Yahvé, therefore, now makes himself felt to the Egyptians who hitherto have desired to know nothing of him: he comes as in a flying cloud into the land to confound and to chastise it, yet not merely to destroy it, but in order that it may turn at last to the true Helper and Saviour when it has vainly sought help in its distress from all the false remedies which it has hitherto used. And at this final prospect and hope the prophet's heart leaps for joy. It is true that he foresees that a single chastisement will not at once accomplish the great work; that Egypt which has been hostile from the earliest times will only gradually acknowledge Yahvé in the right way and worship him with true reverence: but it is clear to his mind that that which is in itself necessary and divinely reasonable must be attained to, that finally Egypt as well as Assyria will fear Yahvé, and the religion of Yahvé will throw the higher bond of brotherly unity and of equal divine blessing around the three kingdoms of Israel, Egypt, and Assyria, which had so long regarded each other with mortal hatred. This great conviction is nowhere else uttered so magnificently and clearly as here: but those times were of the kind which favoured the conception of this free and blessed hope, comp. Ps. lxx., and Yesaya was the great prophet whose mind was able to rise to this free height, and he it was who was able to close his long life with this most happy anticipation as his most becoming legacy to posterity.

The piece forms five symmetrical strophes of medium size: the first describes the general spiritual condition of Egypt, as it at present is and as it will develop itself; the second and

third describe more particularly how its sufferings, increasing from the lowest to the highest stages, will involve everything and with growing severity ; until the two last linger at greatest length and most fondly by the pictures of the divine solution of this confusion and calamity and of the glorious end which must follow.

*High-oracle concerning Egypt.*

XIX.

1.

1 Behold Yahvé rideth upon a swift cloud and cometh to Egypt, | and Egypt's idols shake before him, and Egypt's heart melteth in its bosom. || For I arm Egypt against Egypt, so that they fight every one against his brother and every one against his friend, | city against city, kingdom against kingdom ; || Egypt's spirit is emptied within it, and its counsel I destroy, | so that they apply to the idols and to the ghosts and to the ventriloquists and to the soothsayers : || but I deliver Egypt to a hard master, | a fierce king will rule over them ; saith the Lord Yahvé of Hosts, ||

2.

5 Then the waters fail from the sea, and the river drieth up parched up ; || the rivers become stinking, low and dry the streams of the Land-of-Distress, | bulrush and reed sicken ; || the fields by the stream, by the border of the stream, | and every seed-plot of the stream drieth up, is blown away and gone. || —Then the fishermen sigh, and all mourn who cast the hook into the stream, | and they who spread the nets over the water's surface

are cast down ; || they are ashamed who prepare  
 10 combed flax, | and they who weave cotton ; || and  
 its foundations are broken up, | all hired labourers  
 are sad of soul.

## 3.

Fools only are the princes of Tanis, Pharaoh's  
 wisest counsellors are a stupefied council ; | how  
 can ye say to Pharaoh : " I am a son of wise men,  
 a son of ancient kings !" || Where then are thy  
 wise men ? Let them tell thee | and know what  
 Yahvé of Hosts hath counselled concerning Egypt ! ||  
 The princes of Tanis are befooled, the princes of  
 Memphis are deceived, | and the Egyptians leadeth  
 astray the cornerstone of its castes. ||—Yahvé hath  
 mixed in its midst a spirit of giddiness, | so that  
 they lead Egypt astray in all its action, as a  
 15 drunken man staggereth in his vomit, || and Egypt  
 hath no deed | which the head might do and tail,  
 palm-branch and rush. ||

## 4.

On that day the Egyptian will be like a woman, |  
 will tremble and shake at the swinging of the hand  
 of Yahvé of Hosts which he swingeth over him, ||  
 and the land of Yuda will be to the Egyptian a  
 terror : as oft as he thinketh on it he will tremble |  
 at the counsel of Yahvé of Hosts which he con-  
 cludeth concerning him. || —On that day there will  
 be five cities in the land of Egypt, speaking the  
 tongue of Kanáan and swearing to Yahvé of  
 Hosts : | City-of-joy will one be called. || On that day

Yahvé will have an altar in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar by its border for Yahvé ; ||  
 20 and it will be for a sign and for a witness to Yahvé of Hosts in the land of Egypt | so that when they will cry to Yahvé because of oppressors, he sendeth them a helper and champion and rescueth them. ||

## 5.

Thus Yahvé maketh himself known unto Egypt, and the Egyptians acknowledge Yahvé on that day, | serve with sacrifice and gift, and vow vows to Yahvé and pay them ; || Yahvé smiteth the Egyptians, smiting and healing them, | so that when they turn to Yahvé he is intreated of them and healeth them. || —On that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, the Assyrian cometh to Egypt the Egyptian to Assyria, | and the Egyptians pay homage with the Assyrians. ||  
 25 On that day Israel will be the third to Egypt and to Assyria, | for a blessing in the midst of the earth, || wherewith Yahvé of Hosts blesseth it saying : | “blessed be my people Egypt, the work of my hands Assyria, and my inheritance Israel.” ||

1. Egypt must now feel the mighty arm of Yahvé: he rides as it were upon a swift cloud and at once Egypt with its idols totters in wild alarm, ver. 1, comp. ii. 8 ; viii. 6. The particular indications of this are (vv. 2-4) the breaking out of an endless and widely extended civil war (Egypt already consisted of several kingdoms, of which Tanis and Memphis, vv. 11, 13, were the nearest to the Hebrews), in which they turn in extreme perplexity to every possible class of their false gods and sooth-



sayers; but all in vain, for the final issue of this as of all violent revolutions, will be the rise of a cruel despot (which is at present no more than simple anticipation, as may be easily supposed, comp. ver. 20) ix. 10; iii. 3, 4; viii. 19. It is, therefore, not necessary to conclude that the piece was not written before Psammétich's rise.

2. However, the more artificial the entire condition of Egypt was, amongst other things by virtue of the character of its soil and the manner of its cultivation, the more intimately was the interruption of the latter associated with the divine judgment, as if nature also (vv. 5-7) shared the wrath of Yahvé, losing her vigour and beauty, and herself manifesting wrath against unworthy human beings, comp. xv. 6: and this would in Egypt especially be quickly felt. As soon as the waters of the Nile and its innumerable tributaries fail, not only the less essential aquatic plants, *e.g.*, the papyrus, but also the rich fields and crops of the entire country, even close by the Nile, are as it were blown away by the wind and vanished, vv. 5-7. The *Land of Distress*, ver. 6, as xxxvii. 25. But all the various castes of Egypt (ver. 13) must feel this blow, so that wise counsel and calm self-possession will be nowhere to be found. The lowest classes, who can continue their quiet, customary work only as nature observes her ordinary course, will be the first to feel it; of them primarily the fishermen, so numerous in ancient Egypt, ver. 8 (Herod. ii. 93), then the no less numerous weavers of all kinds, ver. 9, in brief, all Egypt's lower classes that live by manual labour, the broad and necessary *foundations* of the state, ver. 10. Similarly the priestly caste is called, ver. 13, the *corner-stone*, the most important stone, in the edifice of the Egyptian castes. It is well known that the lower classes in Egypt were nothing more than manual and hired labourers and enjoyed none of the liberties of political life.

3. But the higher classes also, who in many ways share the government and support the king with their counsel, have



been thrown into helpless perplexity by the blow, the wisest amongst them becoming as it were a stultified senate, and it is in vain that they loudly boast of their hereditary descent from the most famous ancient priests, sages, and kings, ver. 11: were they really wise, they would discern the true causes of these calamities, therefore recognise the intention of Yahvé and what he purposes to do with Egypt, and advise Egypt accordingly! ver. 12. But that they cannot do, prevented by their petrified folly: they who by their wisdom ought to be the strongest defence of the lower orders, really only mislead the entire land, ver. 13. Thus it appears, therefore, as the true prophet knows, that a higher spirit has mixed and given to the land this spirit of giddiness and drunkenness as an intoxicating wine, so that the people, misled by its own leaders, reels like a drunken man in hideous stupefaction and not a single action proceeds any longer from the consideration and agreement of all classes, vv. 14, 15; v. 22; xxviii. 8; xxix. 9; ix. 13.

4. Thus the alarm of the Egyptians, who find no help in their ancient faith, the alarm caused by the swinging of Yahvé's mighty hand of judgment, will prepare the way, as was already said ver. 1, for true knowledge and reformation, ver. 16, as xi. 15, comp. also iii. 12; and inasmuch as the people of Yahvé represents the visible dignity and truth of his teaching, and there can be no other living channel of communication between Yahvé and the Heathen (comp. ii. 2-4), accordingly the fear with which Egypt then remembers Yahvé will be transferred to His holy land; and every time it thinks of this land, it will be reminded also of Yahvé's wonderful purposes with regard to it, ver. 17, from ver. 12, comp. xxiii. 8, 9.—The prophetic imagination, in perfect accordance with the state of the case, conceives the transition from this first reverential attention to Yahvé and Yuda thus: at first the true religion will arise only here and there in Egypt, but having by its effects proved itself to be a firm defence and real help in

the midst of the great trials of the land, it will then spread continually further by means of its innate power. At first, therefore, there are in Egypt only few cities, some five (xxx. 17; xvii. 6), in which Yahvé is worshipped, perhaps by Israelites themselves that had gone into Egypt, as formerly in the time of Moses: but one of these cities will experience the Divine protection in such an exceptional and marvellous manner that it will be called *Protected*, or *Happy, City*, ver. 18, comp. a very similar instance iv. 3. Or, at first Yahvé has but one altar in the land (Ex. xx. 22-26) and that perhaps on the frontier, where monuments, pillars (Gen. xxviii. 18; xxxv. 14; Josh. xxiv. 26, 27) are often erected: but that one will be a token and witness of him amongst the Egyptians (exactly like vii. 11, sq.; viii. 18; xxx. 8; xxxvii. 30) that when they turn to this solitary altar and come seeking help from Yahvé, it may be against their despotic rulers, they do not pray to him in vain, but receive from him a powerful deliverer, a Moses or a Davíd, who conducts their cause successfully, vv. 19, 20.

5. Thus the happy mutual relationship between Yahvé and the Egyptians is further developed, so that the more he makes himself known to them as the Righteous and Holy One, the more willingly and actively they acknowledge him as one who desires simply to promote their deliverance and welfare by his chastisements, and turn wholly to him, vv. 21, 22; Ex. vi. 3:—And then finally has come the fair time, longed-for by all the good, when the three lands that are now divided by hostility will be joined together by one peaceful highway and free intercourse, when Israel, placed midway between them, has no longer alone, as the chosen spiritual nation, the higher Divine blessing, but shares this with the others as the third portion of a new whole, or as a brother shares the paternal blessing with his brothers, vv. 23-25. Intentionally the words of the same sublime benediction with which Israel was once exclusively blessed by Yahvé, are extended also to Egypt and Assyria. The division of the discourse into short, loosely connected

sentences with the repetition of the phrase, *on that day*, is not more perceptible here than vii. 18-25; ii. 17-20; iv. 1, 2.

Ver. 18 obtained a peculiar importance and occasioned a good deal of controversy from the 2nd Cent. B.C. onwards in the history of the Egyptian Jews. But the suspicion which recent critics have cast upon the genuineness of ver. 18, or even of vv. 16-25, is not confirmed by closer inspection. *Comp. History of Israel*, IV. pp. 464-466.

The *שְׁתוֹת* foundations, ver. 10, are in such a connexion as in Ps. xi. 3; Ez. xxx. 4, those of the kingdom, here, therefore, where the immediate context requires that meaning, the lower classes. Neither in those cases is the word construed as a feminine.—Similarly *פְּנֵה* ver. 13, is construed with the plural only because the priests and other leaders of the people are understood to be meant by this corner-stone, *comp. Zech. x. 4.*

Ver. 16, *אשר* must not be construed with *יד* but with *תְּנוּפָה*, just as in ver. 25 it is construed with *פְּרָכָה*.—Ver. 17, *אשר* כל must be taken in a temporal sense, acc. § 337 c, *ad fin.*, and אל closely connected with *הַזְכִּיר*, as Gen. xl. 14.

Ver. 18, instead of *הַחֶרֶס*, the correct reading is *הַחֶרֶס*, but not *חֶרֶס* in the purely poetic signification of *sun*, as if the historical city of Heliopolis in north-east Egypt were here intended; for a historical city does not belong in the least to this connexion; but the word must be taken pretty much as the Arabic *al-mahrūsah*, which is still used of a city to which one wishes well, properly *the well-protected*, well-preserved, happy city. One reason for the Hebrew origin of the word is that the *sun* itself received that more poetic name only as the *guardian* of the heavens.

Ver. 20, *וַיִּשְׁלַח* might be made to depend on the verb *to pray*, acc. § 347 a, with the signification, *that he may send to them*: in that case *וְהַצִּילִם* need not form the apodosis, but

might be the continuation of וישלח in this sense. Yet their simple prayer for such a saviour cannot serve as a clear *token and witness* to Yahvé: we must, therefore, be content to understand וישלח acc. § 343 b.

We must be on our guard against the supposition that עֶבֶר, ver. 21, is merely an Aramaic word: in Yesaya himself, xxviii. 21, it is seen that in the loftier language it may interchange with עֶשֶׂה; it is further employed here, as in ver. 23, rather with the signification of sacrifice attaching to it. In addition to those already incidentally supplied, a number of other proofs may easily be found for the antiquity of this piece and its origin from Yesaya. For instance, nothing is a greater sign of Yesaya's authorship than the frequent mention of עֵצָה, *to counsel*, עֵצָה *counsel*, vv. 3, 11, 12, 17: but the idea of ver. 12 is reproduced as early as "Isa." xlvii. 13. Further, the entire piece opens to us the clearest view of the ancient Egyptian affairs previous to the times of Psammétich, and is of unique value as a historical memorial of them.

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We have recognised Yesaya's own hand in the arrangement of his writings as far as the fourth of his books. In the subsequent books all clear signs of the great prophet's work in this direction are wanting. His fifth book, according to all existing indications, remained without any connexion with the collective work which he had himself already arranged. His sixth and seventh books were subsequently added to it: the chief portion of the sixth was appended to the longer pieces, but the short pieces concerning Ethiopia and Egypt, xvii. 12—xviii. and xx., as well as the older pieces concerning Damascus—Samaria, xvii. 1-11, were inserted between the pieces concerning the foreign nations in the third book, and the latest piece concerning Egypt, xix., before the short piece concerning Egypt, xx. By this means without doubt the foundation of the larger book of Yesaya's with its two halves was laid, this



book appearing still as ch. i.-xxiii., according to its later form of publication. But in this fusion of the sixth and seventh books with the previously existing larger book of Yesaya's, we cannot discover the hand of the prophet himself.

It was above clearly shown that much of Yesaya's writings has been lost. Many longer or shorter oracles of his were evidently inserted by later prophets in their publications with such verbal faithfulness that we are still able to recognise them certainly enough by the most vivid traits. The subsequent prophet especially, whose work is preserved in "Isa." xxiv.-xxvii., closes it, xxvii. 9-13, with lines which exhibit unmistakably enough in every sentence and almost in every word the characteristic spirit of this greatest of all literary prophets.

### 3.—'OBADYA.

1. The oracle concerning Edom, which has come down to us under the name of 'Obadya, cannot have originated, in the form in which we now have it, before the period of the Babylonian Captivity. The destruction of Jerusalem with the entire dispersion of the nation is clearly presupposed, in fact, particularly described, vv. 11-14, 19-21: acc. to ver. 20 the prophet who published the book was himself in the captivity when he wrote it. In the disastrous days of the destruction of the city and the temple, the Idumeans had wreaked their ancient tribal hatred upon Israel to their hearts' content, as is minutely described vv. 11-15.\* This is the sole occasion of this piece which threatens the Idumeans with their just punishment. From all appearances, it was written not long after the horrible events. We do not find it intimated that a definite danger had already threatened to fall upon the Idumeans: but as certainly as any base and underhand procedure in the end produces its

\* Comp. further *History of Israel*, IV. 270, 274 (III. 802, 806; V. 105 sq.) *Dichter des A. B. Ib.* 345 sq.



own punishment, the prophet foresees the necessity of the Divine chastisement of all such shameful wickedness and the accompanying victory of the true Divine kingdom. From the midst of the innumerable sufferings of the captivity and the complete ruin of the external Divine kingdom, there rises here the severe censure of the haughty kindred nation, and the invincible hope of the victory of the true kingdom of Yahvé and also of the restoration of the fallen Davidic rule, which seemed to be inseparably connected therewith.

2. At the same time, further enquiry shows with equal clearness that this later prophet made use of a piece concerning Edóm which had been written by an earlier prophet. More than a half of the present piece, vv. 1-10, 15-18, in respect of matter, language, and style, points very clearly to one or more of such older prophets. An additional consideration of greatest importance is that at very nearly the same time Yéremyá, xlix. 7-9, used the older piece vv. 1-10 as his own oracle concerning Edom, very much of it recurring in this passage of Yéremyá from vv. 1-9 of our book, but nothing from vv. 11-14, 19-21, which most plainly belong to the later prophet. It is also very probable that the two later prophets had before them the same older piece. We can, with a good degree of certainty, discover from the present book of 'Obadya, with its very vigorous and unusual language, both the meaning and occasion of the ancient piece. Our book quotes it at its commencement, in the least altered form, although with slight abbreviation. A portion of Edóm, probably the capital Petra, had been unexpectedly attacked by enemies, completely sacked, and robbed of its chief inhabitants by deportation; these enemies had just before been Edóm's allies, and it was no evidence of the foresight and prudence of the Idumeans that they had suffered themselves to be thus deceived by confederates. But the want of superior wisdom justly appeared to our prophet as the more humiliating, inasmuch as that nation was at that time often boasting of its special and superior wisdom and culture in com-

parison with Israel.\* And inasmuch as that prophet in respect of language and artistic arrangement is clearly a contemporary fellow-countryman of Yesaya, it is a fortunate co-incidence that we are able to trace distinctly enough the historical occasion of this unexpected calamity of the Idumeans.† But this first, although more transient stroke, fallen upon this people which was so proud of its precipitous rocks and fortresses, seemed to the later prophet not only to confirm the earlier prophetic threats against this nation, which had long since degenerated in matters of religion, but also to be a prognostic indicating how little Edóm would be able to stand at the impending great day of judgment. From such a commencement the threatening oration of the older prophet addressed itself to Edom, as we see it here reproduced in almost exactly its original form, vv. 1-10.

When, however, we go on to examine the words, vv. 15-18, we cannot, it is true, maintain that they formed a constituent part of this older oracle of 'Obadya's concerning Edóm. Edóm is indeed mentioned in them, ver. 18, but the entire complexion of the language is not the same in these verses. It is also clear that Yéremyá did not find these words in 'Obadya's oracle concerning Edóm. There is very much in the complexion of the words that points to Yôél, comp. with ver. 15, Yôél i. 15; iv. 7, 14;—with ver. 16, iv. 17;—with ver. 17, iii. 4; iv. 17; and since Yôél, iv. 19, likewise speaks at least incidentally against Edóm, we might suppose that he was the original author of these verses.‡ Yet we know how much subsequent prophets were in the habit of quoting Yôél's words; and the complexion of the words, ver. 18, points rather to

\* See *History of Israel*, IV. 192 (III. 695 sq.).

† *History of Israel*, IV. 159 sq. (III. 650 sq.)

‡ In the *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.* IV. p. 47, is briefly remarked, how perverse the recent attempt is to make 'Obadya the oldest prophet from whom we possess literary remains; and although the attempt has since then not been quite abandoned, it does not seem necessary at present to say more about it in this place.

a prophet resembling him whose oracles are preserved in "Zech." ch. ix-xi. In any case our later anonymous prophet has also used older pieces in vv. 15-18, since the words concerning Yuda and Yoseph, *i.e.*, the two kingdoms of Israel, ver. 18, do not in their primary signification accord with his own words, ver. 19. The conclusion, *surely Yahvé hath said it*, ver. 18, compared with the formula וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה, vv. 4, 8, may also be referred to an earlier origin, see *ante* p. 131.

3. In as far, however, as the condition of Edóm was at the time of the later prophet essentially the same, inasmuch as it still inhabited the same precipitous rocks and strong fortresses with the same love of robbery, the same confidence and the same hatred of Israel, he could present his own prophetic views as only a reproduction and further amplification of the ancient piece, and still himself publish it under the name of 'Obadya. And thus the description of the condition of Edóm occupies the first strophe, vv. 1-7, with hardly any change from the ancient piece, whilst the second strophe holds out the threat of the great judgment-day of the future, also on account of the quite recent cruelties towards Israel (and at this point the later prophet inserts his entirely new description) vv. 8-15, and the third makes the transition to more general prospects, vv. 16-21.

The heading :

Vision of 'Obadya.—Thus spake the Lord Yahvé concerning Edóm :

looks as if it, together with the entire piece in its present form, had been taken from a larger work of our prophet's, in which he had given a collection of Oracles concerning foreign nations. He knew quite well from the sources of his collection that the piece concerning Edóm, which he wished to place as the super-structure above his own, was by a prophet 'Obadya: and we have no reason to doubt the historical accuracy of his knowledge.

## 1.

A notice we heard from Yahvé, whilst a messenger was sent amongst the nations "arise and let us rise against her to battle !" || Behold small have I made thee amongst the nations, | despised art thou greatly ; || thy heart's haughtiness deceived thee, who inhabiteth in rock-clefts his proud dwelling, who saith in his heart, " who shall cast me down to the earth ?" || Although thou wentest as high as the eagle, and if among stars thy nest were placed : | thence I cast thee down ! saith  
 5 Yahvé. ||—If thieves come to thee, if devastators by night—O how art thou destroyed !—they will surely steal what they require ; | if vinedressers come to thee, they will surely leave a gleanings : || but O how are they of 'Esau searched, | examined are his chambers ! || Unto the border all the men of thy covenant drove thee, deceived thee overcame thee the men of thy peace of thy bread, | spread under thee a net ;—there is no more any understanding in him ! ||

## 2.

Surely on that day, saith Yahvé, will I make sages disappear from Edóm, | and reason from 'Esau's mountains ; || then thy heroes despair, Tæmân ! | that every one from 'Esau's mount  
 10 may be destroyed without battle. || For the cruelty against thy brother Yaqob will shame cover thee, | so that thou wilt be destroyed for ever. || *On the day when thou stoodest lurking, on the day when foreigners carried away his wealth, | and barbarians entered into his gates and over Jerusalem cast*

lots | —then art thou also as one of them ! || —But feast not thine eye upon thy brother's day on the day of his calamity, and rejoice not over the sons of Yuda on the day of their destruction, | and enlarge not thy mouth on the day of distress ! || enter not into my people's gate on the day of their misfortune, neither feast thine eye upon his affliction on the day of his misfortune, | and seize not upon his wealth on the day of his misfortune, || nor stand at the crossway to destroy his fugitives, | nor surrender his escaped ones on the day of distress ! || For near is Yahvé's day upon all the nations, | as thou hast done will it be done unto thee, thy work returneth upon thy head ! ||

## 3.

*For as ye drank upon my holy mountain, will all the nations immediately drink, | yea drink and gulp down and become as if they had not been ! || But upon mount Ssion will be deliverance and it will be holy, | and they of the house Yaqob will occupy their possessions ; || then the house Yaqob will be fire, and the house Yoseph flame, | but 'Esau's house for stubble, by those kindled and devoured, | so that none escapeth of the house of 'Esau ; surely Yahvé hath spoken it. || — For they of the South occupy the mount of 'Esau, and they of the Plain the Philistines, | and they of the mountains occupy the fields of Ephraim and the fields of Samaria, and Benjamin Gilead : || and the banished ones of this coast of the sons of Israel the cities of the Kanáanites unto Ssarephath, | and the banished ones of Jerusalem which are in Sepharad occupy the cities of the South ; || and helpers come unto mount Ssion to judge the mount 'Esau, | and the kingdom becometh Yahvé's. ||*

1. The present calamity has not befallen Edóm without Yahvé's will : for, vv. 1-4, it was preceded by very serious transgressions on the part of Edóm, *e.g.*, haughtiness and confidence in external assistance. Long ago, therefore, the prophets of Yahvé also anticipated such a crisis ; and before the present calamity occurred, they heard the Divine announcement that Edóm must be chastised (Isa. xxi. 1-10), while at the same time the cry, as in consequence of a signal and call from heaven,



or as by an angel, winged its way through the nations, that the movements against Edóm must now begin, ver. 1. The oracle which the prophets long ago heard ran, vv. 2-4: Edóm which had hitherto enjoyed such a high reputation amongst the nations shall be deeply humiliated amongst them, because its own haughtiness deceived it, and it was so profoundly foolish as, by its trust in rocks and fortresses, to bid defiance to Yahvé the eternal, righteous God!—How wonderfully that oracle just then received its fulfilment is described by the prophet, vv. 5-7, in his peculiar manner, as if everyone who considers the character of this calamity must come to the same conclusion, that a higher hand is here at work. For if this had been a common attack, like those which nomadic nations are accustomed to make, Edóm would not have been so completely plundered, or so barbarously treated; thieves steal only as much as seems good to them, vine-dressers similarly always leave at least a gleanings: but, alas, how is Edóm wholly destroyed, completely robbed and ransacked! (Since the last particular is properly the chief thing, it breaks into the first sentence, ver. 5, with the words, *O how art thou destroyed!* in the very middle of this long sentence). And how marvellous that Edóm must be thus deceived precisely by its nearest friends and allies (Ps. xli. 10), thus caught in the net and made to see its nobles go into captivity and exile! Such being the state of things, there can be no other conclusion than that in Edóm there is really very little higher perception and foresight left, that in the great impending trial it will, therefore, succumb in shameful confusion and perplexity (Job xii. 24, 25), this conclusion being followed out in the commencement of the next strophe. The direct address is abandoned in the last member of ver. 7, the discourse turning away, as wearied from displeasure; the opposite is equally possible, “Zech.” xiv. 5.

2. Yea, in the future also, on the great general day of punishment, Idumeans will similarly end in shameful confusion, and their proud warriors be overcome even without a battle, from

pure despondency (in some such way as Isa. xxii. 3, *ante* p. 159), because the heinous transgression of cruel family hatred cleaves to them unpardoned, vv. 8-10. Yet as the main theme of the later prophet has been thus approached, he takes it up, ver. 11, with his own words, and describes how certain it is that Edóm on the day of the destruction and sacking of Jerusalem acted toward his brother as only some foreign, wild barbarian could, vv. 10, 11; it is true it stood only *opposite*, *i.e.* neither near nor far off, waiting and lying in wait, with a view to indulge quite safely its desires as soon as the best opportunity should offer, Ps. xxxviii. 12: but precisely such a neutral position is baser than an openly hostile one, and as a fact Edóm did Israel greater injury thereby than if it had acted openly, as appears from the detailed description, vv. 12-14.—But let it beware! let it not perform such shameful actions as it has here actually performed! The Divine voice of justice and the anticipation of eternal retribution thus address it reprehensively, 12-14: for the general judgment day is near to it also, ver. 15. With great emphasis the time of calamity is mentioned in the long record of such evil deeds, at the end of every sentence, vv. 12-14, since it is precisely at the time of the calamity of a brother that such treachery and malicious joy is doubly culpable.

3. In fact, the general day of judgment will soon come upon all nations, and as its consequence the redemption of Israel from evil and restoration of the Davídic kingdom: then will Edóm's fate be also determined!—The great judgment held upon the mount Ssion, where the sons of Israel emptied the cup of suffering just described, vv. 11-14, is only as the commencement of the universal judgment; as they drank the cup in Ssion, all nations shall forthwith drink the cup in their countries (comp. Jer. chap. xxv.), but the latter, inasmuch as they are morally quite different from the sons of Israel, drink their cup in another way and with other consequences, namely, so that they quite gulp down the dregs of the cup, Ps. lxxv. 9, therefore become totally insensible and dead, as if they had

never been, Job. x. 19. Especially in the new strophe, it follows as a matter of course that the sons of Israel are addressed in ver. 16.—In contrast with the fate of the nations, there will be in Ssion, when this great general judgment takes place, a refuge and salvation (as is said vv. 17, 18, in conformity with Joel iii. 5, and other earlier oracles); and this mountain which is at present desecrated will again become holy, the Israelites will again take possession of their possessions, and animated with new zeal and fire easily burn up Edóm as ripe and sapless stubble, Nah. i. 10.—The new kingdom, that is, will be restored (as the prophet's imagination goes on to depict it, vv. 19, 20), at least as far as the ancient territories which are at present held by the Idumeans to the north and the west are concerned, so that the Israelites which still dwell in the extreme south of Yuda inhabit the *mount 'Esau, i.e.,* the most ancient territory of the nation in the extreme south-east, the Israelites of the south-western plain by the sea inhabit the neighbouring Philistia, at present Idumean, they who are at present dispersed about the *mountain, i.e.,* further north in mountainous Yuda, inhabit the middle of the country, Ephráim and Samaria, and the Benyaminites the districts beyond the Yordan; then those who are dispersed further north by the Mediterranean, to whom our prophet himself belonged, take possession of the coast as far as Sarepta, which was formerly Kanáanitish but then Idumean territory, other exiles from Jerusalem, on the other hand, who were living furthest to the north, in Sepharad, take those southern cities of Palestine which had become vacant by the above movement to the extreme south of Edóm, comp. Zech. vii. 7; whilst in Ssion all the helpers, *i.e.,* acc. Judg. ii. 16, the great heroes and judges of the nation, then assemble also for the purpose of judging, *i.e.,* ruling over, the then subjugated Edóm, and the rule of Yahvé is consummated, the ultimate goal is reached.

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Whoever is able to catch the true force of prophetic utterances generally, will perceive that the words of the whole first strophe, vv. 1-7, yield a suitable sense only when they are interpreted as has been indicated above, but that then they are also quite worthy of an older contemporary of Yesaya. The very commencement, v. 1, shows that although the words are very similar to those of a Yesaya, they are from a prophet possessing very marked characteristics: and this prophet will never be understood unless the two following particulars are borne in mind. (1) שמועה, in the connexion in which it here stands, must have the same signification as Isa. xxviii. 19; and (2) the context requires that the *messenger* should be an angel, as if the very ancient and genuinely Hebrew feeling made its appearance again in this case, as it was formerly expressed Judg. v. 23. Only in the present instance it is blended with the genuinely prophetic feeling in quite a new manner: at the same moment in which the prophets receive an announcement from above which they may further publish, each in his own way, an angel is sent from above to arouse the nations, so that they then say amongst themselves with marvellous unanimity, *Arise and let us, etc.*—With regard to שים, ver. 4, see § 149 *f.*—That להמך, ver. 7, must be connected, contrary to the accents, with the preceding words (since it supplies no clear sense if connected with those that follow), appears also from the consideration, that then the two previous verbs completely correspond in the rhetorical rhythm and poetical structure of the sentences to these two nouns similarly without an *and*.

Ver. 9, בְּקֶטֶל can signify *without battle*, acc. § 217 *b*: if that cannot be doubtful, it suits well the sense of the foregoing member, whilst if they were connected with ver. 10, *on account of the battle on account of the cruelty against thy brother, etc.*, a pleasing climax would scarcely be produced.

It is clear enough from the whole connexion that the words, vv. 11-13, refer to something in the past which Edóm ought



not to have done, comp. § 136 *f.*: but when it is said, nevertheless, ver. 11, *then art thou also as one of them*, as if it were in the present, it is because the horrible nature of the thing, *per se*, is before the mind rather than its temporal relations: a usage often found in such cases.—On הַשְׁלָחָנָה, ver. 13, see § 246 *a*.

The figure, which notwithstanding its great brevity is manifestly brought prominently forward at the opening of the last strophe as of great importance, ver. 16, bears every appearance of being an echo from Jer. ch. xxv. ; and there, ver. 27, its strong colouring also occurs, only that it is in each case represented by a different word (as in the similar passage, Ps. lxxv. 9), which must, however, bear essentially the same signification.

Ver 19, the word הָהָר has dropped out after the second וִירָשׁוּ, as the LXX. shows: we have then in the *mountainous*, *i. e.*, northern Yuda, the otherwise missing link between the *Négeb*, *i. e.*, the southern slope of Yuda and Benjamin. But ver. 20 it is necessary to read with the LXX., אֶת־אֶרֶץ, or better אֶת־עַרְי, before כְּנַעֲנִים instead of אֲשֶׁר. On the ground of its orthography alone, comp. vv. 11, 13, חַל cannot stand for חֵיל, and *host* would be here in all cases meaningless, since it was by no means merely people of the army only who were exiled. It appears to be used as a difference of dialect instead of חֹול *sand*, sand in the meaning of coast; with הוֹרָה this prophet points to the district where he lived with the exiles here intended. But *Sepharad* according to this context would be naturally looked for further to the east of this coast; at the same time, supposing this reading to be correct, no one has yet succeeded in discovering the name anywhere else than in this passage notwithstanding the recent ingenious discovery of a similar name upon a Persian cuneiform inscription; it is perhaps an early copyist's error for שַׁפְּרָם or שַׁרְרָם (שַׁרְרָעַם), a place nine miles south-east of 'Akkô, where at all events in later times many Jews lived, comp. Joh. Schwarz, *das heilige Land*, p. 138 (p. 96 *b* of the Hebrew edition); in Reland's *Palæstina*,



p. 999, compared with the *addenda*, the word is merely forgotten; Niebuhr's *Reisen*, Book 3, p. 69.\* With regard to another possibility which would amount essentially to the same thing, see *History of Israel*, IV. 162, note (III. 655). What has been subsequently made of this *Sepharad*, is to us more a matter of indifference: we might suppose it was *Hispiratis*, now called *Sbér*, or Ispir, between Armenia and Kappadokia (comp. Vivien St. Martin in the *Nouv. Annales des Voyages*, 1847, May, sq., and *Études de Géographie ancienne* I., p. 250); the later Jews themselves in the East made of it the Bosphorus and the surrounding countries, especially the city of *Kertsch* (as is now known from the Qaraitic literature), in the West they made of it Spain as of the foregoing צרפת Gaul: but these are all absolutely unhistorical conjectures. Whoever really understands the words, vv. 19, 20, will perceive that nothing else is here described than the manner in which the Yudeans who were still found dispersed in the ancient Kanáan may drive the Idumeans both from their possessions in the north, whither they had then advanced, and from the older ones; and so far the passage has great historical value. We see here more plainly than anywhere else what districts the Idumeans had then under the protection of the Chaldeans taken possession of; and other scattered indications of the same fact do not contradict this geographical sketch. We also see what a number of Yudeans still dwelt in a scattered way in ancient Kanáan, although it might be in captivity.

\* Perhaps the author refers to Niebuhr's *Reisebeschreibung*, ii. table 31. *Tr.*

## 4. MIKHA.

1. Mikha comes before us as a younger contemporary and fellow-countryman of Yesaya's. The powerful oratory of the great prophet, which was fearlessly directed against the whole of Jerusalem and Yuda, is heard from the lips of Mikha with almost the same force; the matter is very similar, in particular ideas, thoughts, phrases, and peculiarities of style, there is considerable likeness, only in Yesaya one seems always to hear the powerful original.

There is only one circumstance by which he is obviously distinguished from Yesaya, which also probably assigned to him a very different sphere of activity. According to the heading, i. 1, which in this respect agrees with Jer. xxvi. 18, he is from Morésheth, without doubt the same small town of Yuda that he himself mentions under the name of Morésheth, near Gath, i. 14. In fact, many indications betray the inhabitant of the lowland country. The complexion of Mikha's language itself is distinguished from that of Yesaya by many peculiarities of the kind which might be looked for from an inhabitant of the district bordering on the ancient Philistinian boundary as distinguished from the language of the capital. The chief point, however, is, that while Yesaya has everywhere the capital primarily in view and discourses and labours in it alone, Mikha has as clearly the country before him as the immediate sphere in which his imagination and thoughts move, although he is compelled to speak most concerning the capital owing to its decisive importance. It is especially the towns of the country that he sees smitten by the great calamity which his imagination pictures as coming upon the land, and he lingers longest by the description of their position, i. 10-15. And in his Messianic conceptions, while he follows the more definite and distinctly out-lined elaboration of them which we first meet with in Yesaya, he gives prominence to the country of Bethléhem by

the side of Jerusalem in a way quite peculiar to himself, as if in this particular also he were unable to let go the country as his sphere of vision with its antithesis to the capital, iv. 8 ; v. 1.

2. We know from Yesaya how the internal condition of Jerusalem assumed an increasingly deplorable form until some time after Hizqia had ascended the throne, and how the most unworthy magnates nevertheless found prophets who were base enough to flatter them. It is against such destructive internal injuries of the kingdom that Mikha also contends. He raises his stern, fearless voice against the degenerate magnates of the time, particularly, as it appears, against one of the most injurious of them, ii. 5 ; iii. 10, perhaps the Shebnâ described by Yesaya, xxii. 15, 16 ; against the false prophets, against all the ungodly and destructive tendencies of those days, wherever and in whatever form they appeared. The increasing confusion in the internal affairs of the kingdom, and the impenitent, thoughtless life of the masses, may long have seemed to the prophet to be a preparation for an early Divine chastisement and a calamitous overthrow ; and just then a new phenomenon appeared on the horizon of the time, giving a firmer outline to all future prospects.

For it follows with certainty from the opening of Mikha's book, that at the time when it was written the Northern kingdom was approaching its end with rapid strides : the Assyrians were probably already advancing to the final siege of Samaria. This decisive event must have greatly affected the prophets : the devastating tempest whose approach over the holy land they had long ago anticipated from afar, was already as close at hand and in as threatening a form as was possible ; the Southern kingdom was now more seriously threatened with the prospect of seeing the storm break over its borders also, which had been hitherto but little affected by it ; and a solemn picture of Divine chastisement, from which no thoughtful man could turn his eyes, was presented to all as a terrible warning. How natural it was for a prophet of Yuda to find in that event

the occasion for his orations, is shown by the piece Isa. xxviii-xxxii, which belongs to the same period although according to all appearances it is a little earlier ; it combats the same vices, though from another point of view and in connexion with a special question ; especially is the same multitude of false prophets opposed as in Mikha's book.

When this event, occurred, therefore, the Divine tempest, which had so long been threatening in the distance, seemed to the prophet to be quite near and certain to descend with unsparing violence upon the holy land, and particularly upon Yuda, for the purpose of laying bare all false greatness in its nakedness and weakness. He can anticipate even for Yuda and Jerusalem, because the basis of good in the kingdom was corrupted, nothing but the severest chastisement, indeed the entire overthrow of the existing kingdom and the luxurious capital together with the temple, and beholds the realisation of the Messianic hopes only as proceeding from the ruins of the present irremediable state of things. Precisely this serious view of the present, this expressed necessity of a destruction even of the temple at Jerusalem, notwithstanding the certain truth of the Messianic expectations, is the chief peculiarity of this prophet, and according to the remarkable testimony of Jer. xxvi. 18, comp. iii. 12, it was also considered as such even in ancient times. Mikha, unlike Yesaya, who as living at the centre of the kingdom could better study and understand foreign affairs, did not occupy himself with the relations of the kingdom to Assyria and Egypt : but with the more unerring aim his words strike at the internal vices of the land, the covetousness of the powerful, the unrighteousness of the judges, the corruption of the false prophets.

3. The plan of the book, with this subject-matter and scope, follows naturally partly from the ultimate occasion of it, partly from the violent conflict with the false prophets in which Mikha was involved. He must hold forth the threat of a tempest of Divine chastisement, which is rolling up from Samaria over the



whole of Yuda also : but he must threaten this in conflict with the false prophets, who, in order to flatter the degenerate magnates, painted the future in splendid pictures of prosperity and would hear nothing of a Divine chastisement of these magnates. He is, therefore, compelled both in his threats and his Messianic promises to prepare the way in opposition to the false teachers, before he utters the pure doctrine, no longer disturbed by them, and attempts the true mediation and reconciliation in the midst of this darkness and confusion on the basis of the eternal, Divine truth. When, therefore, (1) beginning with Samaria, but soon passing to Yuda alone, he has sketched in language of unusual agitation the certainty of the threatening tempest of Divine anger against the perversities of the magnates of the Southern kingdom, ver. 1, he collects himself (2) to prove more particularly precisely this certainty from its causes, especially with reference to the evil magnates and their prophets, vv. 2, 3 ; that finally (3) he may show that he, no less than the false prophets, is indeed able to promise eternal prosperity and salvation and to sketch sublime Messianic pictures, but it is with quite another meaning and under other conditions than is the case with the false teachers, chaps. iv. and v.

These are the three genuine portions of this book of Mikha's: each of them differs from the others with respect to its entire tone and character, so much so that the structure of the strophes takes in each case a peculiar form ; and yet the same fundamental thought connects them indissolubly together. With these three portions the book is completed and finished, and both well arranged and closely connected in its various strophes. The following chapters, vi. and vii., on the other hand, form an entirely different piece, and belong (as will be shown below) to another prophet.—Similarly the heading, i. 1, cannot have come from the hand of the prophet in its present form :



## I.

1 The word of Yahvé which came to Mikha of Morésheth in the days of Yotham Ahaz Hizqia the kings of Yuda, which he spoke as seer concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

This heading may correctly assign roughly the time at which Mikha lived: but his book does not fall so indefinitely in the time of these three kings; it must, on the contrary, have been written in the reign of Hizqia, shortly before the destruction of Samaria, which is also shown by the trustworthy historical reminiscence, Jer. xxvi. 18. The meaning of the historical note of the heading, compared with Isa. i. 1, must be that Mikha did not commence his prophetic labours until after the reign of Uzzia, and was, therefore, younger than Yesaya: in this sense it is not superfluous. As little could Mikha himself speak of Samaria and Jerusalem as equally the subject of his book, since it properly deals with Yuda only, and Samaria is mentioned only briefly and in passing at the commencement: so that this note is intelligible only as the opinion of an early reader who found Samaria mentioned in the opening of the book. It is further remarkable that in the ancient historical note in Yéremyá, the name of the prophet has a somewhat different, and, as it appears, more ancient orthography, *Mikhaya*, LXX. Μιχαίας (*K'thîb*).—The real date of the heading is discussed Vol. I. p. 94; comp. *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.* V., p. 247 sq.

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1.—THE JUDGMENT OF GOD.

## Ch. i.

Mikha is compelled to hold out the threat of the certain coming of the Divine judgment with its punishments, of which he has a foreboding. He must threaten Yuda and Jerusalem with these punishments; although they may not be overtaken by them so soon as Samaria, they will not escape. He must

especially threaten his own country with them, although it is against his will, and even with lamentation and sighs, compelled by the truth, the causes of the punishments being painfully clear. And who must not be most deeply moved at the certainty of the ruin of his own people? Mikha at all events is unable to repress the most profound agitation as soon as his mind comes to confront the consideration of this ruin: accordingly, the first section of his book is entirely occupied with this extreme agitation. Mikha must pronounce the threat of the certain coming of the Judgment upon both kingdoms: let all nations on the earth below and Yahvé himself from above witness the truth of the threat which he will pronounce! ver. 2. But he must proclaim that Judgment upon both kingdoms, as he has so clearly seen it, both as to the nature of its coming and its necessity, vv. 3-7. Now, however, the thought approaches more particularly that object, upon which from the first it tends to rest, namely, Yuda: O how profoundly is the prophet moved at the closer view of the terrible calamities which will befall the numerous cities and villages, great and small, of Yuda! vv. 8-16. Thus the entire discourse unfolds itself by successive outbursts in strophes of increasing length, until the third and last at once takes more the form of a simple lamentation, which obeys entirely the necessities of its own peculiar tone and measure, whilst the oracle properly speaking with its Divine *I* seems to subside.

## 1.

Hear all ye nations, and give heed O earth and her fulness! | and let the Lord Yahvé be against you for a witness, the Lord from his holy palace! || —

## 2.

For behold Yahvé goeth forth from his place, | cometh down and treadeth upon the heights of the earth, || and the mountains melt under him, the

5 valleys cleave asunder | like wax before the fire,  
 like water poured into an abyss. || — Through  
 Yaqob's guilt [is] all that, and through the house  
 of Israel's transgressions! | — who is Yaqob's  
 guilt? is it not Samaria? | and who is Yuda's  
 Heights? is it not Jerusalem? || Therefore I make  
 Samaria into a ruin-heap of the field, into vineyard-  
 plantings, | and pour into the valley her stones,  
 and her foundations I lay bare; || and all her  
 carved-images are broken up, all her harlot's-  
 presents burnt with fire, and all her images I  
 make a desolation! | for from harlot's hire were  
 they gathered, and unto harlot's hire shall they  
 return. ||

## 3.

For this cause let me lament and wail, go bare-  
 foot and naked, | let me raise a lamentation like  
 jackals, a cry like the ostriches, || because incurable  
 are her wounds, | because it cometh unto Yuda,  
 reacheth unto the gate of my people unto Jerusa-  
 10 lem! || In Gath [*Tellby*] tell it not, in 'Akkô [*Weep-*  
*ton*] weep not! | in Bæth-leaphra [*Dustton*] *rolled I*  
*myself in dust!* ||

Pass by thou citizen Shaphîr [*Fairtown*] with  
 shame uncovered! | the citizen Ssaanān [*March*]  
 is not marched forth; the lamentation of Bæth-  
 haëssel [*House of Union*] taketh from you its  
 stand, || because about good trembleth the citizen  
 Maroth [*Bitter*], because evil hath come down from  
 Yahvé to Jerusalem's gate! || Bind the chariot to  
 the horse thou citizen Lakhîsh [*Horsham*], | thou

beginning of the sin for the daughter Ssion, because in thee were found Israel's transgressions. ||

Therefore wilt thou [O Ssion] give a relinquishment of Morésheth-Gath [*Possession near Gath*], | the houses 'Akhzîb [*Liespring*] become a lie to  
 15 Israel's kings! || yet will I bring the heir unto thee thou citizen Maresha [*Heirby*], | unto Adullam [*Cave of wild Beasts*] will Israel's splendour come! || Make thyself bald [O Ssion] on account of the sons of thy delight, | make thy baldness large like an eagle, that they are gone into exile from thee ! ||

1. Let not merely all the nations of the earth and all that moves upon it hear the truth of the following severe discourse, but let also Yahvé himself become a witness against you of the truth of this threat, ver. 2; Isa. i. 2 is followed, but in an original manner.

2. For the prophet cannot keep silence with regard to the dreadfully threatening tempest, which is clearly before his mind in the manner of its approach. The entire creation takes part, a mysterious horror runs through everything, and the prophet has the plainest presentiment that Yahvé will descend in storm and tempest and encamp upon the heights of the mountains, so that they even melt like wax before fire under his weight and his burning anger, and the valleys rend asunder with a crash, as when a waterfall thunders into an abyss, vv. 3, 4; Ps. xviii. 8; Amos iv. 13.—Is it asked, why all this happens? It is clear that the perversities of the two communities and kingdoms are the guilty cause of the provocation of this Divine anger; but in the two kingdoms it is only the two capitals which represent as persons, as it were, the entire sin of these kingdoms, the unfaithfulness of the Northern and the Heights, *i.e.*, the idolatrous Bamoth-cultus (*History of Israel*, III. 306 (III. 418), *Alterthümer* 301 (260)),

of the Southern kingdom, which Mikha compresses into a few emphatic words, ver. 5, in order that he may quickly pass to the chief point, comp. "Isa." xlii. 18, 19. Accordingly Samaria will be first overtaken by this tempest, vv. 6, 7, it will be wholly destroyed, so that on the mountain where it now stands is seen only a few stone heaps in the midst of the field, and new plantations of wine, comp. iii. 12, and all its various kinds of idols will be destroyed by the conquering enemy; but with the last particular the real cause of the ruin of this great and luxurious mercantile city is touched; for the end bears the character of the commencement, as Samaria has collected its treasures and power from the numerous rich presents to its idols, or thereby that it seduced the whole land to its idolatry, Hos. ix. 1, its treasures accordingly will be again brought as offerings to the idol-temples of its conquerors, becoming again harlot's hire. In this way the last phrase which has the ring of a proverb, explains at the same time the preceding bold denomination of the costly images as *presents of harlotry*.

3. It is not with joy that the prophet announces the horrors of such a destruction; he is compelled to weep over it, especially as it will roll nearer and nearer over Yuda and Jerusalem and not Samaria only. Yet notwithstanding his grief, he foresees only too clearly that the destruction will come; therefore he falls here into a long elegy, he cannot restrain himself, he requests only to be permitted to lament aloud, as jackals and ostriches howl, Job xxx. 29. Jerusalem may give up its splendour and mourn most deeply over its own desolation! But all towns of the lowland country also, where Mikha lived, must feel the terrible blow: wherever the prophet turns his eye, he foresees calamity, every name of a place reminds him of its disaster, which is also the general disaster of the whole land, and accordingly paronomasiae follow one upon the other. This gloomy, burdened elegy pours forth its grief in three symmetrical strophes of three verses each. (1) Vv. 8-10, the mourner is at present quite unable to overcome his own tumultuous



feelings, because he sees that her, *i.e.*, Jerusalem's (which is not yet mentioned by name) wounds are *sick*, *i.e.*, incurable, that nothing will be spared; in the hostile border cities, where the enemies lie in wait with malicious joy, in Gath (quoted from 2 Sam. i. 20) to the south and 'Akkô to the north by the sea, let not the serious hurt be made known even by too loud weeping! Yet the prophet cannot control himself, in Bæth-leaphra (or Ophra in the tribe of Benyamîn, Josh. xviii. 23, which might at that time belong to Yuda), which by its very name reminds him of the dust, he has as good as rolled himself in the dust, *i.e.*, been overwhelmed with sorrow.—(2) Vv. 11-13. Prepare yourselves, but with fear and trembling, ye towns of the lowland country, the lamentation cries to the chief of them in somewhat calmer language. Thou Shaphîr, who according to thy name shouldst be *Fairtown* (which is, however, elsewhere *Shamîr*, Josh. xv. 48), pass by, led away captive, accordingly with no fair aspect, without clothes or covering! Isa. xx. 4, comp. xlvii. 2; Ssaanan, Josh. xv. 37, which from its name ought to *march to war* with courage and full ranks, has not marched forth against the enemy, Amos v. 3, but holds back in fear and trembling; from you, ye cowards, the lamentation of Bæth-häésel, *i.e.*, House of Union (probably the same small place that is called *Assél*, "Zech." xiv. 5), takes its stand, its rise, owing to its nearness; for, on account of the threatening loss of good, Maroth also trembles, the place (otherwise unknown) whose very name calls to mind bitter calamity, the evil of Jerusalem is indeed unalterably determined; thou Lakhish, a city whose name calls to mind *rêkesh*, *i.e.*, horse, especially a war-horse (comp. *Hist. of Israel*, III. 260 (III. 356)), flee with horse and chariot as soon as thou canst, since thou, moreover, as the city of Yuda which worshipped idols even before Jerusalem (a fact which is mentioned here only) art most deserving of thy fate!—(3) Vv. 14-16. If this is so, the lamentation concludes returning to Jerusalem, then must thou, proud, luxurious capital, relinquish the city Moré-

sheth near Gath, although even its name seems to promise that it shall become thy *possession*; the city Akhzîb in Yuda, Josh. xv. 44, and that bearing the same name in the Northern kingdom on the Phœnician border, in Greek *Ekdippa*, the kings of Israel will lose, the signification of the names of these cities, *Falsespring*, i.e., deceitful water, Job vi. 15, being thus confirmed. To the city of Maresha also, in the south of Yuda, a new heir will come, taking it into his own possession, destroying and dividing it, although its name seems to denote *heir*, or secure possession, comp. ii. 4; away as far as the cave 'Adullam in the most southern desert Israel's splendour will go, its proud magnates that they may hide in the cave on their flight, Isa. ii. 19; therefore mourn only, Ssion, over the exile and captivity of thy luxurious inhabitants, for grief tearing off all thy hair as the eagle which loses hers annually! Hos. ix. 11; x. 5, 8.

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The first words, *hear it all ye nations!* occur also in the history of the elder Mikha. 1 Kings xxii. 28; but the connexion is in the two cases quite different.

It might appear strange, especially after the corresponding passage concerning Jerusalem, iii. 12, that the ground of Samaria shall become new vineyards, i. 6, and yet it is quite correct, for the ground upon which Samaria was built had been undoubtedly originally planted with vines, as the bare mountains of Jerusalem could not have been, so that it only appeared that what had formerly existed must again recur.—On קִבְצָהּ, ver. 7, comp. §§ 93 *a*, 131 *d*: without doubt the passive force accords best with the structure of the two verse-members, Mikha immediately afterwards, ver. 9, construes a similar plural with the fem. sing., and a similar variation of the gender with the two verse-members is shown in the same verse in the case of בָּצָהּ and נָנַע and iii. 2 in טֹב and רָעָה *K'thîb*.

Reland had in his day concluded from the LXX that in ver.

10 בָּעָפּוּ should be read instead of בָּבוּ ; as regards all the following places, the sense of the whole passage requires that they must be looked for in the kingdom of Yuda, Akhzîb, ver. 14, being no complete exception to this. *I rolled myself in dust* is certainly strange, since everywhere, and especially in ver. 14, the address of others, wherever the use of paronomasia allows it, is here most natural: yet the *Q'rî, roll thyself* (O woman)! cannot be said to supply an easy meaning, inasmuch as neither the city of this member nor Jerusalem can very well be addressed. Probably Mikha simply retained the entire sentence from some older book.

The results of a comparison of ver. 13 with ver. 5 with regard to the guilt of the town of Lakhîsh are given *History of Israel*, IV. 147 sq. (III. 634 sq.): the transgressions mentioned in ver. 13 and ver. 5 must correspond, and then it is clear from ver. 5 which at least in general are intended.

With reference to Akhzîb, ver. 14, it is needful only to remember, in order to understand the paronomasia, that probably numerous witty sayings had long been in circulation with regard to this duplicate Akhzîb, one of the cities being claimed by the king of Yuda, the other by the king of the Ten Tribes. The plural *houses* really points to the two cities of the same name, since nothing is said either in this or in any of the other sentences of the houses of a single city, and it is not easy to conceive why this city should not like all the rest be called simply Akhzîb; a single city might, however, be called בֵּית אֲחִזַּיִב. *The kings of Israel* also point to the same fact, since if the Yudean Akhzîb merely had been intended, the *king of Yuda* would have been named instead.—It appears also that all the places mentioned here are still recognizable as belonging to the kingdom of Yuda, with the exception of מְרוֹת, ver. 12; but perhaps this is only a later form of the name מַעְרַת, Josh. xv. 59, LXX. Μαγαρώς, Josh. xv. 37 צֶאֱנָן, ver. 11, is written צִנָּן (incorrectly pointed צֶנָּן).

## 2. THE PROOF OF THE NECESSITY OF THE JUDGMENT.

## Ch. ii. and iii.

But the discourse rises again from this elegy to its full prophetic force and character, to indicate much more fully than was done i. 5, the proof of the necessity of the approach of that judgment and at the same time the causes that must bring such great misery upon the kingdom. The discourse turns, therefore, to the violent magnates in Jerusalem. The first of the five symmetrical strophes of medium length has really done with them: yet inasmuch as these crafty people, relying upon evil prophets as their flattering friends, pretend to find a libel of themselves in the words of the true prophet, Mikha is compelled, from the second to the fourth strophe, to make some side blows, before he can return in the fifth and last straight to the chief subject of this threat.

## II.

## 1.

1 O they who meditate vanity and prepare evil upon their couches, | when the morning dawneth to execute it, because—it's free to their hand! || and covet lands—and rob them, houses—and take them, | and do injustice to the man and his house, to men and their inheritance! || —Therefore thus saith Yahvé: behold I meditate an evil upon this family | from which ye will not draw your necks nor go upright! because it is an evil time. || On that day will proverbs be taken up concerning you, and there will be *wailed* the *wail* “the *worst* is come!” saying

“ Laid waste laid waste are we :  
the heritage of my people is measured with  
the line ! |

O how withdraweth he from me—  
he allotteth to the rebel our lands ! ||

5 Therefore wilt thou have no one who may cast the  
line by lot in the community of Yahvé. ||

## 2.

“ Preach ye not ! ” preach they, | “ they shall  
not preach concerning this ! the revilings never  
cease ! ” || —What a word, thou house of Yaqob !  
is then Yahvé become impatient, or are these  
his doings ? | do not my words mean well to  
him who walketh uprightly ? || And long ago they  
set up my people for an enemy, away from the  
garment ye strip off the mantle | from those passing  
by quietly, those averse from war ! || the women  
of my people ye drive from the house of their plea-  
sure, | from off their children ye take my adorn-  
10 ment perpetually. || Arise and be gone ! for this is  
not the restingplace, | because of pestilent im-  
purity and incurable pestilence ! ||

## 3.

If a man walking in wind and deceit should lie  
“ I will prophesy to thee of wine and of sweet-  
III. drink ! ” | he would be the prophet of this  
1 people ! || \*—But I say : hear now ye heads of

12 \* [ *Gather gather will I thee all Yaqob, will bring  
together the remnant of Israel, | join it together as*



Yaqob and judges of the house of Israel! | (Is it not your business to know justice?) || ye who hate good and love evil, | who have plucked off their skin from off them and their flesh from off their bones, || who have devoured my people's flesh, and their skin from off them have flayed and their bones broken, | and deal it out like what is in the pot, like meat in the midst of the caldron! || (—then will they cry unto Yahvé yet he will not hear them, | he will hide his face from them at that time, according as their deeds are corrupt !) ||

## 4.

- 5      Thus saith Yahvé concerning the prophets who mislead my people, | who bite with their teeth and cry peace, but whoever putteth nothing into their mouth against him they hallow war: || Therefore will ye have night without a vision, and it will be dark to you without divination! | Yet if the sun goeth down upon the prophets, and the day groweth dark upon them: || then the seers blush and the soothsayers are ashamed, all of them cover their lip-beard | because they have no answer from God. || But I am full of power with Yahvé's

*sheep of a fold, as a flock in the midst of its pen, | so that they roar with men! || The breach-maker advanceth before them, | they break through and pass on—the gate and go out through it, | and the king passeth on before them and Yahvé at their head!" ||* ]

spirit, and of judgment and manliness, | to proclaim to Yaqob his guilt, to Israel his sin! ||

## 5.

Hear now this ye heads of the house of Yaqob  
and ye judges of the house of Israel, | ye who  
10 abhor justice and twist all that is straight! || thou  
that buildest Ssion with blood | and Jerusalem  
with wrong, || the city whose heads pass judgment  
for bribery, and whose priests teach for gold and  
whose prophets divine for silver, | and yet lean upon  
Yahvé saying "is not Yahvé in our midst? no evil  
will come upon us!" || Therefore for your sake  
will Ssion be plowed as a field | and Jerusalem  
become ruins, the temple-hill forest-heights! ||

1. ii. 1-5. The transition from the previous section something similar to Isa. v. 8, while the course of the new section is quite different. Woe to those who in their leisure and repose follow no other thoughts than how they may carry out predatory excursions and do injustice against the weak and helpless, and who then carry out all their desires as soon as possible (when the morning light comes after the black silent night of intrigue and evil projects), forthwith seize what they had wickedly coveted, do wrong both to the man and his property—and all for no other reason than they have the power to do it, or think they have! vv. 1, 2. Accordingly the punishment, which is already preparing in Yahvé's secret mind, will correspond to the sin: those haughty men who at present bear their necks so high and insolently, Ps. lxxiii. 6, 7, shall in vain wish to raise themselves from the calamity which is coming upon their necks; and they who rob others of their property, having become a general laughing-stock (Hab. ii. 6), shall wail forth the wailing cry (*nehî*, Amos vi. 10, comp. ver. 13) "it is done,"

all is lost ! (*nihya* is here used for the sake of the paronomasia, comp. γέγωνε Rev. xvi. 17), the mighty God, whose name we now dare hardly take upon our lips (Amos vi. 10), has laid us waste, our lands are already being measured out afresh, we are wholly deprived of our inheritance, and how ? alas he allots it to the hostile conqueror (the Assyrian) ! Amos vii. 17. (*The Rebel* is here the heathen, unlike Jer. xxxi. 22). Thou wicked man, whoever thou art, comp. iii. 10, wilt be for ever driven out of the community of Yahve in such a way that in the future, in probably better times, thou hast not even a descendant who might cast the measuring-line with a lot, *i.e.*, who might be able to claim a portion, a piece of land at the new distribution of it, Jer. xxix. 32, Ez. xiii. 9.

2. ii. 6-10. It is true, these people will not have discourses of that kind ; they cry, “prophesy not !” as if they were themselves prophets ; and add : “people ought not to prophecy about these things, these affairs of the magnates ! the revilings (as they choose to call the words of truth) never come to an end !” comp. Amos vii. 16. But, the prophet breaks in with dignified displeasure, what language is this you are using ! Has Yahvé become passionate or revengeful, so that he were able even to do what ye charge him and his discourses with, as if he desired to revile ? on the contrary, do not his words always deal kindly with him who walks uprightly ? ver. 7. And such wicked accusations are thrown out against him whilst the helpless, the poor, notwithstanding that they are Yahvé’s people, are constantly treated in the most shameful manner, as if they were even enemies (Job xvi. 12), the travelling cloke is stripped off from wholly peaceable, harmless travellers and their gold taken away, for miserable reasons, *e.g.*, on account of small debts of poor people, women are taken away as pledges and cruelly driven out of their houses, or their necessary clothing, the adornment which their God Yahvé had given them, is stripped from the children as a pledge ! vv. 8, 9. comp. Ez. xvi. 14. No, that is beyond all bounds ! Ye

have thus pronounced your own condemnation : begone from my land into exile ! as was already said ver. 5 ; here ye may no longer tarry in luxurious repose (acc. Isa. xxviii. 12), on account of the infectious, pestilential impurity which cleaves to you, and because this pestilence is incurable, i. 9 ; vi. 13.

3. ii. 11—iii. 4. And truly, if one constantly habituated to wind and deceit should mendaciously prophesy to them fair and flattering promises, that they would always live in such an intoxication of joy and pleasure (Isa. v. 11, 12), he would be the prophet according to this people's own heart ! ver. 11. The two following verses contain promises of great happiness : Israel again united into one great flock, so that for multitude they make loud noise, and like sheep in a too small fold are unable to keep within their ancient boundaries, force their way under a great hero, one who breaks through, a conqueror, from one captured city into another, with Yahvé as their leader, Hos. ii. 2 [i. 11] ; Ex. i. 10 ; these lying prophets depict to the people nothing but such glowing pictures of approaching prosperity and great victories. Nevertheless, it seems Mikha himself, or another early reader, wrote these words of one of the prophets, whom he really had in his mind at first only in the margin, as an example of their false prophecies ; they are not absolutely necessary in the context, and they also destroy the structure of the strophes.—Mikha's prophecies are of another kind : all the more openly he summons these magnates and judges to hear the Divine sentence against these false prophets, which he is about to pronounce ; he summons them to hear this because they as the heads of the nation ought most of all to hear the Divine sentence, Hos. v. 1, they who are the opposite of what they ought to be, fleecers of the people, who slaughter it, divide it amongst them, and devour it as a delicacy, Ps. xiv. 4, Rev. xvii. 16, who, however, will one day, when the Divine judgment arrives, call vainly to Yahvé in the same proportion as they now commit wickedness, ver. 4. Thus this strophe, having started from a mere parenthetical

sentence, ver. 1 *b*, finishes without being able conveniently to commence the stern utterance against the pseudo-prophets, which they must hear; this is left, therefore, for the following strophe.

4. iii. 5-8. The false prophets, who in sacred phraseology proclaim peace or war according as something is given them to bite (eat) or not, shall be suitably punished, inasmuch as the day of trial suddenly deprives them of the light of the eye and the mind, and no more receiving any oracle they must maintain an ignoble silence, Isa. xxix. 10, 11; comp. lii. 15: whilst, on the other hand, a true prophet like Mikha always finds in the spirit of Yahvé sufficient strength, judgment and manliness to bring before even the whole nation, when it is needful to do so, as at present for instance, its guilt and deserved punishment.

5. iii. 9-12. The magnates of the realm, who desire to pay no attention to justice, and prefer to pervert all uprightness, are therefore called upon to hear this public censure of the false prophets and proclamation of the truth, especially must the rich man hear, who although he rebuilds Jerusalem, yet does it with the blood of the oppressed, ver. 10. Because all kinds of leaders of the people in Jerusalem are corrupt, although they imagine that they have Yahvé's favour, and make a show of their reliance upon him ((just as Amos ix. 10): on this very account, the conclusion of all these words is, will Jerusalem together with the temple become ruins, just as was the case with Samaria, i. 6.—Mikha probably intends by the one magnate of iii. 10; ii. 5, the Shebnâ of Isa. xxii. 15 sq.

ii. 1, אִיר must be taken acc. § 238 *b*.

With regard to the dirge יְהִי, see *Dichter des A. B. Ia*, p. 42 sq. It must, however, be observed that a complete



dirge follows the first detached note of lamentation נִתְּיָה, which is rendered *the worst is come* simply on account of the paronomasia.\* The dirge consists of two brief lines, the first member of each of which is shorter than the second when the correct reading is restored. According to the present reading a paronomasia might seem to lie in the words יָמִיר and נָמִישׁ, and the translation would have to be *the heritage of my people he* (Yahvé) *changeth*, causing it to pass into other hands as if by exchange or sale; and the next clause *O how doth he remove* (which would mean almost the same as *changeth*, or *selleth*,) *it from me?* a lamentable inquiry followed by the answer: he allotteth it to the enemy! But the idea of changing would be thus too briefly and unintelligibly expressed; and, following the LXX., a far better meaning is obtained if יַמִּיר is read and בְּחֶבֶל is then inserted: preparations are already making to redivide our fields; and how? They are to be given to the enemy by lot! This was probably an existing popular song: on which supposition it may be best explained how the prophet himself, v. 5, goes on to make the application of it to the case before him, and the first strophe may therewith hasten to a close within its proper limits.—In any case this dirge which is sung by the exiles themselves is wholly different from the *gnomic song*, i.e., satirical song, ver. 4 a, which others will strike up.

As to הֶאָמִיר, ver. 7, see § 101 b; in Arabic also the *Alif*, i.e., *ā* prefixed to a noun can have the force of the vocative, as Hamâsa p. 745, 5. As in Gen. iv. 7, הַטִּיב may also signify to *mean well*, descriptive of the intention and feeling; and upon הַיָּשָׁר הַלֵּף see § 335 a.

The long censure, ii. 8, 9, begins forcibly with אֶתְמִיל, which bears here the meaning of *long ago*, as in Isa. xxx. 33, and closes with לַעוֹלָם, which has nearly the same force. But it

\* The author translates the words וְנִתְּיָה נְהִי נִתְּיָה und winseln wird man winselnd "weh! vorbei!"—Tr.

should also be observed that this second strophe closes, ver. 10, with substantially the same threat as the first, ver. 5.

It is time it should be generally understood that the words of vv. 11, 12, can have no place here save in the sense which has been above given to them. In appearance the genuine prophets prophesy the same thing: and yet what a difference, as soon as one attends more minutely to the passage! When we hear the Messiah called boldly *their king*, as if such glorious things could be looked for from any king that was then living, we are quite unable to recognise that Messiah who is described by Yesaya and Mikha. Or we have only to compare the commencement of this luscious prophecy as to the future *gathering* of the whole nation with what Mikha, iv. 6, 7, says as if in designed contradiction of it, to comprehend how far he was from being able to approve of these words.

iii. 12, it is remarkable that Ssion as the bare hill on the south is still accurately distinguished from Jerusalem as the entire ancient city exclusive of the hill of the temple and also from this hill itself, comp. *History of Israel*, III. 121 sq. (III. p. 165 sq.

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### 3. THE PROMISE.

Mikha also can utter glorious promises concerning the Messianic times and their great happiness, as well as any lying prophets: he is able to proclaim them more powerfully and in a more beautiful form than they, for he does not utter them in flattery to existing magnates, but from the most living faith, the deep conviction that such times of consummation must at last arrive. And as the previous threat had to be very severe, he now the more gladly summoned all his powers to depict in grand glowing pictures the bright side also, which every true prophet cherished in his anticipations and views of the future. Yet while Mikha can present as bright promises as those false

teachers, there is a great difference which separates him entirely from them. He does not in the midst of these elevating eternal hopes overlook the real condition of the present time with all its profound defects and corruptions, and is, therefore, unable to give himself up without reserve to those hopes. Confident of the consummation of the true community as older prophets had already promised it, and full of the fair hope of the appearance of a new David who will far excel even his great predecessor, he looks into the impending serious troubles of the Davidic kingdom not without confidence, it is true, indeed, with defiant courage; but at the same time he cannot in the Divine spirit hide from himself the fact that the existing vices and transgressions can only serve in the immediate future to increase for a time the sufferings and dangers that are already assailing the kingdom, yea, that the destruction of Jerusalem itself and the exile are necessary; nor can he avoid seeing that the longed for Messianic age will not come save by the removal of these existing obstacles in the way of a better state of things. So different from the view of his opponents, so joyous and at the same time so serious is this form which Mikha's anticipations assume. It is in this part, therefore, that the book reaches its climax, with a rapid change of very various feelings and truths, which pour themselves forth in four large strophes of 7-8 verses each, the last one only being somewhat shorter. At the commencement the prophet places the same glorious description of the Messianic age from an older prophet that Yesaya also, ii. 2-4, placed at the head of one of his books; this portion of the book is thereby worthily introduced, the eye is at once directed into an entirely different region, into the pure, bright realm of blessed hope; but the passage appears to be very happily chosen for the further reason that it treats of the same Ssion with which the previous piece had closed, thus bringing the opposite prospects into immediate contrast. But after the Messianic hope has been in the first strophe brought forward in its pure and simple beauty, the second glances with higher

courage from this point upon the impending sufferings as the necessary transition period to that glory, which the third then calmly takes up once more and describes exhaustively; till in the fourth the great condition and limitation under which all such promises are alone to be understood is supplied.

## 1.

## IV.

- 1 “And then at the end of the days will the mountain of the house of Yahvé be placed upon the summit of the mountains, and it is exalted before hills, | so that to it the nations flow, || and many nations go and say ‘come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahvé and to the house of the God of Yaqob, that he may teach us of his ways and we go in his paths!’ | for from Ssion will go forth the doctrine, and Yahvé’s word from Jerusalem. || Then judgeth he between many nations, and giveth decision to numerous Heathen afar off, | so that they forge their swords into hoes, and their spears into pruning-knives, | nation against nation raise not a sword, and learn not war any more, || and dwell each under his vine and under his fig-tree, by no one made afraid: | surely the mouth
- 5 of Yahvé of Hosts hath spoken it. || — If all the nations go, each one in the name of his God: | then let us also go in the name of Yahvé our God for ever and ever! || — On that day, saith Yahvé, will I gather that which is lame and that which is scattered abroad bring together, | and what I only injured, || and make that which is lame a remnant, and that which was chased away a numerous

nation, | and Yahvé reigneth over them upon mount Ssion from henceforth and for ever. || But thou Tower-of-the-flock, thou hill of the daughter Ssion— | unto thee will arrive and come—the former rule, the kingdom of the daughter Jerusalem! ||

## 2.

Now wherefore criest thou [O Ssion] so loudly? | is there no more any king within thee, or hath thy counsellor perished, that trembling seizeth thee as a woman in travail? || O tremble and be in labour daughter of Ssion as the woman in travail! | for now wilt thou go forth from the city dwell in the field and come unto Babel: there wilt thou be set free, there will Yahvé redeem thee from the hand of thy enemies! ||

Yea now against thee many people may have assembled, | they who say “may she be desecrated, and on Ssion shall our eyes feast!” || But they know not Yahvé’s thoughts and understand not his purpose, | how he hath brought them together—as sheaves to the floor! || Arise and thresh thou daughter Ssion! | for thy horn will I make iron, and thy hoofs will I make steel, | so that thou crushest many nations | and sacrificest to Yahvé their plunder, their wealth to the Lord of the whole earth. ||

Now press together thou daughter of the press! Siege may they have laid upon us, | with the staff may they have beaten the judge of Israel upon



V.

1 the cheek ! || Yet thou Bæthlehem-Ephrátha, small to count among Yuda's provinces : | from thee will one go forth for me to become ruler over Israel, | and his origin is from antiquity, from primeval days. ||

3.

Therefore will he give them up until she that beareth hath brought forth | and his remaining brothers return to the sons of Israel : || then he standeth there and shepherdeth with Yahvé's power, with the majesty of the name of Yahvé his God ; | but they settle down, for then he will be great unto the ends of the earth ! || And this will be peace : | when the Assyrian cometh into our land and when he treadeth our lofty-edifices, we set up against him seven shepherds and eight anointed  
 5 men ; || they shepherd Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in its gates ; | thus he delivereth from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land and when he treadeth our border. || Then will the remnant of Yaqob in the midst of many nations be as dew from Yahvé, as showers upon herbs, | which waiteth not for mortals neither tarrieth for sons of men ; || or the remnant of Yaqob will be among the Heathen, in the midst of many nations | as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young-lion among the flocks of sheep, | who when he passeth by trampleth and robbeth with no deliverer. || Let thy hand be lifted up over thy oppressors, | and all thy enemies will be cut off ! ||

## 4.

But then on that day, saith Yahvé, then I cut off thy horses from thy midst, | and destroy thy  
 10 chariots, || and cut off the fortresses of thy land |  
 and demolish all thy fortifications ; || I cut off the  
 enchantments out of thy hand, | and magicians  
 thou will not have, || I cut off thy graven-images  
 and statues from thy midst, | that thou no more  
 doest homage to the work of thy hands ; || I pluck  
 up thy idol-groves from thy midst, | and cast  
 down thy fortresses, || and execute in wrath and in  
 fury vengeance | against the nations which did not  
 hear. ||

1. On vv. 1-4, see the commentary on the passage in Yesaya, *ante*, p. 22 sq. The transition to the prophet's own words, ver. 5, is like Isa. ii. 5 : if every other nation reveres its God,—follows his commandments and hears his oracles, then we also will for ever follow Yahvé and his ancient oracles, *e.g.*, precisely that oracle concerning the Messianic times which is here quoted, and which Mikha further elaborates in his own way. Yes, then in that glorious time (but not at present as the false prophets say, ii. 12, 13), will Yahvé gather together again as the nucleus of a great new nation all the fragments of the widely scattered, banished, and halting flock of Israel, which he was once himself compelled to injure by punishment, so that then the true eternal Theocracy begins, never again to be destroyed, vv. 6, 7. But that which is here of peculiar importance and original is, the addition which Mikha, following in Yesaya's steps, joyfully makes to the ancient promises, ver. 8, that the former wide Davidic rule shall return by the Messiah, who, having sprung like David from Bethlehem, rules in Ssion, to the unimportant place called the *Tower of the Flock*, between

Jerusalem and Bæthlehem, Gen. xxxv. 21 (comp. *M. Sh'qalim* 6, 4), as also to Ssion, comp. further v. 1.

2. It is true, severe sufferings must come upon the community henceforth in the intermediate period until the blessed time arrives, as the prophet foresees with equal clearness: but if that great hope is once firmly established, how can Ssion despair? Let these sufferings come, they must be borne; but they cannot hinder the fulfilment of that eternal hope, must, on the contrary, really hasten it! With this exalted, defiant courage, the prophet beholds certain distinct classes of these approaching afflictions. In agitated language he proceeds from the extreme limit of the future which here occupies him back to the present, observing three stages. This he does in order to present at each stage the contrast of the corresponding still greater hope. (1) Vv. 9, 10. The prophetic glance beholds Jerusalem, *i.e.*, the community, already as good as annihilated, already as without king and counsellor, Hos. iii. 4; x. 3; xiii. 10, 13, lamenting aloud as if attacked by the most violent pangs of a travailing woman, that is, at that time when the existing Jerusalem will really be destroyed, acc. iii. 12. But Divine confidence with higher courage demands of her in a tone of surprise and reproof, wherefore she cries so loudly? whether her king and counsellor is lost that she trembles like a woman in labour? And then, as if after a moment's thought, the Divine confidence replies: O no! the true king is never absent from thee! Be in labour, agonising in extreme pain, this birth-crisis of a new age must be gone through: for thou must go into exile, sent to Babel by the Assyrians, but there the hour of birth (of the Messiah and the regenerated community) as well as of true redemption arrives!—(2.) Vv. 11-13. Coming back somewhat nearer to the present, the prophetic glance beholds Ssion already surrounded by conquerors, eager to destroy and delighting in her humiliation; but, cries Divine confidence, let them surround the holy city, full of unholy thoughts and deeds, the more violent their rage and the more

they collect around the one holy place to desecrate the last sanctuary of the earth, so much the more easily and irresistibly can they be reached with one blow by the Divine punishment. This is a turn of events which is as little anticipated by them as it is firmly resolved upon in the Divine councils (for the summit of wickedness is the place for its fall), so that it may really be said, that Yahvé has collected them all around Ssion to punish them with greater ease, just as sheaves are conveyed together to the threshing-floor to be threshed. The victory is thine, the harvest is ready for threshing, arise and thresh, strengthened by higher power (Hos. x. 11), devoting the precious plunder of the vanquished thankfully to Yahvé as to him who rules over the heathen also! A twofold anticipation that reminds us of Isa. xxix. 1-8, which nevertheless does not cancel the punishment of iii. 12, as also appears from Isa. xxxii. 13, 14, because it is precisely Jerusalem as the community of true religion which has received a higher signification.—(3.) Vv. 14, 15. The prophetic glance beholds that in the immediate future the Assyrians will still further treat the gentle king Hizqia with his people in a disgraceful manner (as they had already treated him thus), and that in the closely besieged city only a poor little flock of people must crowd closely together like a flock in a thunderstorm (that is, according to the other anticipations of this book, before the city shall be quite taken and destroyed, its inhabitants led away captive). But press, cries the higher confidence, close together in your distress, thou daughter of the press, *i.e.*, those who art at other times accustomed to press and drive together others (Gen. xlix. 19), and it is to be hoped wilt in the future again press upon and conquer others, press and crowd together both now and for some time to come, as a flock at the time of tempests, and bear up patiently; the Messiah will yet certainly come! Thou little Bæthlehem, who canst scarcely make a district in Yuda (Zech. ix. 7), thou art not too insignificant in the sight of Yahvé, no more than Davîd, thy shepherd's son, was formerly too insignificant in his sight,

from thee the Anointed of Yahvé, a second and greater David, will go forth, himself sprung from the ancient, venerated Davidic royal line ! The Davidic house, compared especially with the changing dynasties of the northern kingdom, could at that time be justly called *ancient*, since, in fact, the antiquity of those times had in general not yet become of such an extent as we now consider it ; comp. Amos ix. 11 ; Isa. xi. 1 ; xxiii. 7.

3. The combined sense of the two previous strophes shows that the Messianic prosperity will by no means come immediately, nevertheless it is still certain and how glorious ! Yahvé, it is first said, will *give them up*, surrender them to their enemies, until she who bears has brought forth, *i. e.* (since the oracle Isa. vii. might already be used as a model in Mikha's time) until the as yet unknown mother in David's house shall have given birth to the exalted child from whom the better time takes its rise, the Messiah, and his brothers that remain from the great trial, the Israelites, shall return, awakened and strengthened, from the exile to the few who will still be living in the sacred land, just as formerly the march out of Egypt was the sign of the beginning of a better age, Isa. xi. 11, 12. When these two happy events take place in conjunction, then the full splendour of the Messianic prosperity begins to shine, the Messiah, on the one hand, reigning with Yahvé's all-embracing power and in his exalted name, and the people, on the other, attaining to durable repose, iv. 4, Amos, ix. 14, because from that time Yahvé's name will be revered amongst all nations, ver. 3. Peace is the proper end and the distinctive feature of the Messianic time : yet it does not consist in indolent subjection, but will be thereby prepared, that then not only is the one Messiah great and glorious, but an inexhaustible number of great leaders and princes support him, repelling in his own land every attack which the Assyrian, for instance, might again make, and conquering the gates, *i. e.*, the boundaries and frontier fortifications (Nah. iii.



18) of the land of Nimrôd (Assyria); for the Messianic prosperity does not consist in there being no danger of any kind, but in its being warded off by a number of great men, worthy of the Messiah, before it becomes destructive, and the speedy return of peace, vv. 4, 5. Zech. ix. 16; x. 4.; Isa. xxxii. 1, sq. And as reviving dew and rain falls everywhere in innumerable drops from Yahvé alone without waiting for the will of men, so the Messianic people will then be found unexpectedly and as if rained from heaven everywhere dispensing refreshing doctrine and knowledge amongst the heathen, without the heathen being able wholly to keep them off, ver. 6, comp. Ps. cx. 3: these Messianic people being but a few in the wide world, but these few like lions whose simple appearance suffices to put all small animals of the forest and field into a state of alarm, ver. 7. So let it be and so must it be; arise Israel and conquer! ver. 8.

4. But all the glorious things which have been promised in these three strophes cannot co-exist with the numerous perversities that now prevail: these perversities must, therefore, be all first abolished in the great judgment-day! Thus with sad seriousness and brief threatening language, the discourse returns to the burden of the first two main sections. There are especially two quite universal perversities of the nation which cannot remain: trust in false resources and vain help, which in real danger give no assistance, horses and chariots, castles and fortresses, vv. 9, 10; and the false direction of faith, superstition of various kinds, vv. 11, 12. Hos. iii. 4; the first and the second perversities will be destroyed on that great day, when severe judgment is passed upon all disobedient nations, whether they are Israel or heathen, vv. 13, 14. Thus there are three pairs of verses here, the verses of each of which are more closely related, whilst in the third and last instance the matter of the first two pairs is only briefly reiterated and finally concluded. But both in regard to the horses and the needlessness of defenced cities, it is nothing more than a

reminiscence of the primitive times of this community under Moses that crosses the mind of our prophet, comp. *History of Israel*, II. 130, sq. (II. 187). And as Mikha with respect to the Sanctuary, (see *ante*, p. 291) is more advanced in his view of the future than even Yesaya, so with regard to fortified cities and the curse (iv. 13; v. 14, comp. *Alterthümer*, p. 101, sq. (86 sq.)) there is no other prophet who goes so far back as he into the times of Moses. And yet it should be carefully noted that he says at the last, only those nations shall meet with a double portion of his wrath who did *not hear*: accordingly the Divine truth must previously be clearly preached to them, and in that case all nations become equal in that manner implied in i. 5, even if this refers primarily to what was said, v. 6, 7.

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Apart from the fragment of Yôél's (see Vol. I. p. 114), the style of this section differs somewhat from that of the two previous sections. The phrase ׀ ׀ ׀, iv. 6; v. 9, does not occur in ch. i.-iii. (nor, indeed, ch. vi. vii.): at the same time, it is elsewhere very frequent only in the case of certain prophets, as 'Amôs, Yéremyá, Hezeqiel, other prophets, even Yesaya, using it more rarely. Further, the representation of a city as a daughter pervades ch. iv., v., but not ch. i.-iii., where, on the contrary, i. 8-16, the city is called a *citizeness*, see Vol. I., p. 189, when figurative language of this description is used of it; at the same time, just as this latter figure is found only in the particular piece i. 8-16, as being there specially appropriate, so in the section before us the figure of the *daughter Ssion* might with peculiar propriety be preferred and kept up where the discourse rises to the pure height of Messianic prospects; in conjunction with this figure, the name of a city, beginning with *house* or *tower*, is also used poetically as a masculine, iv. 8; v. 1. While these peculiarities might suggest doubt of Mikha's authorship, there is much that supports it. The choice of ׀ ׀ ׀ and ׀ ׀, together with the entire thought

of iv. 6, 7, is unmistakably intended as an allusion to the words of ii. 12, 13, which is at the same time a confirmation of the opinion that Mikha did not himself invent those words of the false prophets, although, nevertheless, he alluded to them; just as iv. 7, he clearly uses the expressions גוי עצום and הר ציון (comp. also ver. 13) with iv. 1, 3, in his mind. Further, the thought and form of expression of iv. 13 is very similar to ii. 10; in this respect also that both bring a small strophe to a rapid close. The frequent use of שָׁדָה, i. 6; ii. 2, 4; iii. 12 iv. 10, which Yesaya, *e.g.* rarely uses, and the construction of the plur. עֵינֵינוּ, iv. 11, comp. *ante*, on i. 7, similarly point to Mikha.—There would be more reason to doubt Mikha's authorship if the prophecy of the complete destruction of Jerusalem, iii. 12, contradicted that which we find here, iv. 8—v. 3: but, in fact, there is no more a complete contradiction here than there is between Isa. xxix. 1-8 and xxxii. 12-14, see *ante*, p. 224, and the only difference between Yesaya and Mikha is, that the latter describes the temple-hill also as quite waste during the interval.—At all events, Mikha's book could not have closed originally with the two portions i.-iii., inasmuch as they contain no Messianic outlook; and, on the other hand, iv.-v. belong incontestably to the same limited period of time. At most, therefore, we could do no more than suppose that a piece by some contemporary prophet had got into the place originally occupied by the lost piece of Mikha's: but after all is said, these three portions, i.-v., are not so dissimilar as to compel us to accept this supposition. We shall find it otherwise in the case of vi., vii.

In iv. 8, the unusual agitation with which everything is expressed in a great sentence, with its double start, direct address, predicate, subject, is very remarkable: hence here also the accentuation places its great distinctive accent exactly in the middle of the whole verse immediately after the first predicate, as if the verse really consisted of only two halves. Mikha's reason for mentioning here the *Tower of the Flock*

especially, though it is elsewhere so little referred to, would most likely become clear if we were in possession of all the Messianic Oracles ; for he plainly makes particular reference to many older Oracles of this class. As it is we must content ourselves with the consideration that both this tower and Bæthléhem had been alluded to in the ancient Patriarchal History.

But the agitation of the discourse evidently rises still higher in the following strophe, iv. 9—v. i. : not a line of which can be understood unless this unusual emotion of the inmost heart at the thought of the Messiah, of his possible, certain coming, and also of the terrible sufferings which precede it, is comprehended, and unless the three stages in which the thought moves backwards from the furthest future of these Messianic events in a gradual approach to the present, are clearly distinguished. At the same time, the discourse is plain enough when it is properly understood. Upon each of these three stages there are three steps through which the thought moves with great agitation : the recognition and painful sense of a profound trouble ; the consideration of it ; the sudden, joyous, yea, defiant rise above it. Thus a struggle goes on between the most unshaken hope and Divine confidence and the clear truth-loving gaze into the most serious complications and miseries which have already partly begun and must further ensue : and however difficult the victory of the former over the latter may be, it is nevertheless won. In this respect the passage is quite peculiar, and has a marvellous beauty of its own.—With regard to וְהִרְמַתִּי, ver. 13, see 190 c : since Mikha, as was above remarked, affects nice variations in the two members of a verse, this difference from the preceding וְהִרְמַתִּי may be intentional.—*Judge*, iv. 14, instead of *king*, only in imitation of ancient and venerated language : the same consideration that immediately produces the solemn combination of Bæthléhem and Ephráta, v. 1.—As to צֶעִיר לַהֲיִיתָ, v. 1, see § 285 d.

It is clear that with the exception of the incidental thought,



iv. 9, the full transition to the Messiah is not made before the end of the strophe, iv. 14, v. i, afterwards to dwell, at the beginning of the following strophe, v. 2 sq., on the consideration of his bright picture. It is at this point that the entire discourse reaches its climax, and the Divine light and exalted repose, which has been won in that struggle of most various anticipations and feelings, shines forth undisturbed at the commencement of the third strophe. But with whatever brevity Mikha here brings together the things that concern the Messiah, we cannot help seeing that he is able to speak of him and of those who are most nearly connected with him with such brevity as we find him doing in ver. 2, only because he is referring to things which were at the time generally known: what those things were is indicated *ante*, p. 81 sq.—As, however, Mikha's greater contemporary is always willing to give *signs* in matters that are difficult to perceive, see *ante*, p. 13, Mikha also adds here v. 4, 5, at least in words, a new mark by which the glory of the Messiah and his age may be recognized; for it is necessary to take the first words, ver. 14, *and this is their salvation*, or *peace*, in such a sense that the following supply an example of the salvation and peace which he will bring; the word וְהַשְׁלֵם, ver. 5, may also be referred to the Messiah, and not as in Isa. xix. 20, since nothing compels us in our passage to suppose God is intended.

*The fortresses*, עָרִים, v. 10, properly *cities*, because originally all cities were in high situations (an Aramaic *Tell*, as the ancient sites of those cities are still recognized by such *levelled hills*) and fortified, Isa. xxxii. 19, or, in any case, usually fortified, Num. xiii. 19.—It was shown above that there is no ground for doubting the correctness of the reading עָרֵךְ, ver. 13; on the contrary, the cities are very properly mentioned a second time in conjunction with the idol-groves.

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### III. YESAYA'S IMMEDIATE SUCCESSORS.

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#### I. AN ANONYMOUS PROPHET.

“Mikha,” ch. vi., vii.

Inasmuch as prophecy greatly flourished and was exceedingly influential at the time of Yesaya, and a great number of glorious prophets gathered around him, it is the more surprising to find this field so barren immediately after his death. But we have already indicated the explanation of this phenomenon, Vol. I., p. 53. We should be without even a single complete piece from this gloomy period, did we not possess the small but beautifully finished piece which, appended to the book of Mikha as chaps. vi., vii., usually passes under his name. If we were to endeavour to connect this piece closely with chaps. i.-v., we must proceed in the following manner. The promise, we should have to say, has not become finally predominant in the strophe v. 9-14, but has at last given way for threatening again : and yet the book ought surely not to begin and close with threats, without mediation or reconciliation, the genuine prophetic spirit not seeking to remove by doctrine and explanation the hindrance which in the present stand in the way of what is good, or to mitigate the severity of the threatening. We must, therefore, suppose that Mikha presents in this extremely instructive piece the best mediation which the prophetic spirit could attempt in the darkness and confusion of the time, this piece certainly laying bare to us with rare clearness the depths of the love of the genuine prophetic spirit. The nation shall not be threatened and condemned merely, as at present : it shall also be heard in its self-defence before the eternal judge, and not be finally condemned before it comes

itself to feel that it is no longer able to defend itself even before the freest and most favourable tribunal: and for this purpose a solemn trial (*processus*) is here commenced. Yet when carefully weighed these considerations are not satisfactory. Not only is it undeniable that the piece, chaps. i.-v., correctly understood, is with its three sections so complete in itself, after the manner of the prophecy of Yesaya's time, that there is nothing further wanted, but there are other reasons of quite another kind against the integrity.

For, first of all, we are in these chapters translated into quite different times. There is in them no further any trace of the stirring and elevated times of Yesaya's activity. The community which still gathered around the temple and a national prince (vi. 9), has become very small and retired from external affairs, very faint-hearted and exceedingly fearful, vii. 11, 12; vi. 6, 7: but the petty, degraded, selfish, faithless thought and feeling of individuals towards each other has become proportionally greater, which is precisely what is to be expected from a nation that is suffering from increasing calamities from without and threatening to sink ever deeper into a condition of internal decay, vi. 10 sq., vii. 1-6. The distance of this time from that which is clearly manifested in Mikha, ch. i—v, is perceptibly great: indeed, we seem to be placed in those times which are familiar to us from certain Psalms (comp. *Dichter des Alten Bundes* I b, p. 152 sq.), Yéremyá, Habaqqûq, and other productions of the 7th cent. B.C. We feel here the effects of the cold, biting wind which king Manasse brought over the kingdom of Yuda: it is also plain from vi. 16 that the idolatrous tendency which this king favoured had long been prevailing; and the more religious hardly ventured, acc. vi. 9 b, to name the king quite openly.

If it would be of itself conceivable that Mikha, supposing him to be young when he wrote ch. i-v, had lived to these times and was thus the author of ch. vi., vii. also, this possibility vanishes as soon as we remember that the language is

quite different in the latter piece. We have here nothing of the elevated force which is still met with in Mikha ch. i—v. as an echo of Yesaya's lofty eloquence: the style of the piece before us already approaches very nearly that of Yéremyá. In details also the complexion of the language of our prophet is so entirely different that we nowhere perceive the peculiarities that prevail in the former chapters. Even where at first sight a similarity appears to exist (as in the structure of the sentences, vi. 10 *b*—12, compared with iii. 10, 11), it vanishes on a closer comparison.\*

The form and art of our piece is also so essentially different that on that account alone we can hardly suppose that we have the same author here. This is the first prophetic piece with a purely dramatic plan and execution that we have met with, leaving far behind it those first essays of dramatic description which have previously come before us. It looks as if our prophet had been no longer able in any way to appear and speak publicly in Jerusalem. And how could he have done that during the reign of Manasse? Accordingly, with the most vivid clearness and firmest confidence, he has traced out in his spirit the entire relation subsisting between Yahvé and his people, and feels himself called upon as a prophet to interpose as it were; but what had with clearness and certainty appeared to him as a prophet in the fire of wrestling thought and believing vision, he reproduces forthwith in an artistic form as an author as distinct from a public speaker. That the most severe Divine judgment must come upon the nation as it now is, and that a Messianic Israel can arise only upon the ruins of the present hopelessly lost nation, are positions he holds as firmly as all the earlier prophets of those centuries: and how righteous this punishment must appear even to him who has to bear it, this prophet graphically describes under the figure, which had often been used by his predecessors, of a judicial trial

\* The addition of *אשר*, vi. 12, producing a decisive difference.

between Yahvé and his community. But the great proceedings of unequalled character, which the prophet has already clearly beheld in his spirit, and in which he must take most exciting part as mediator between the two contending parties, he depicts in a drama, which could not be more animated, more true, more full of feeling, or more profoundly exhaustive notwithstanding its great brevity. The entire piece proceeds amidst changing voices : and there are not fewer than ten voices that are heard one after the other. But since the prophet still retains the ancient artistic form of the strophe, the whole falls into five strophes which are also five acts, thus completing all that has to be said and giving it a perfectly rounded form. We shall, however, subsequently see how this piece, which notwithstanding its new form is still very simple, was afterwards imitated with much more elaborate art.

This piece accordingly can have been appended to the book of Mikha only by accident, as it were : but it is possible that the younger prophet himself appended it on the publication of a new edition of Mikha's book.\*

## VI.

1.

1.

(THE PROPHET) :

Hear now that which Yahvé hath to say!—  
 Arise contend before the mountains, | and let the  
 hills hear thy voice ! ||—Hear ye mountains Yahvé's  
 contention, and ye unchanging foundations of the  
 earth ! | for a contention hath Yahvé with his  
 people, and with Israel will he dispute. ||

\* Comp. *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.* XI. 29 sq.; *History of Israel*, IV. 207 (III. p. 716).

(YAHVÉ) :

My people! what have I done unto thee and wherewith wearied thee? | answer against me! || Surely I led thee up from the land of Egypt, and from the slaves'-house I redeemed thee, | and sent  
 5 before thee Mosé Ahron and Miryam. || My people! remember what Moab's king Balaq advised, and what Bileam son of Be'or answered him\*—in order to acknowledge Yahvé's righteous ways! ||

(THE PEOPLE) :

Wherewith shall I come before Yahvé, bow myself before the God of the height? | shall I come before him with burntofferings, with calves a year old? || taketh Yahvé pleasure in thousands of rams, in ten thousands of rivers of oil? | shall I give my firstborn as my guilt, the fruit of my body for the expiation of my soul? ||

(THE PROPHET) :

He hath proclaimed to thee O man what is good; | and what requireth Yahvé from thee but to do justice and to love kindness† and humbly to walk with thy God! ||

## 2.

Hark Yahvé calleth to the city (surely it is salvation to fear thy name!): |

\* From *Shittim* unto *Gilgal*.

† Germ. *huld*. See a valuable discussion of the meaning of יְהוָה in the author's last work, *Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, Vol. II. p. 207 sq.—*Tr.*



(YAHVÉ):

- Hear O community and who appointeth her! ||
- 10 Are there still in the house of the unjust the treasures of injustice | and the accursed waning measure? || are they innocent with scales of injustice | and with a bag of deceitful stones? || —she whose rich men are full of violence, and whose inhabitants speak lies | since their language is deceit in their mouth! || So I also smite thee incurably! | amaze thee on account of thy punishments: || thou wilt eat but not be satisfied, since thy raging-hunger remaineth in thee; | and remove but not rescue, and what thou rescuest will I give to the
- 15 sword! || thou wilt sow but not reap; | thou wilt tread olives but not anoint thee with oil, and must —but drink no wine! || And ‘Omri’s statutes are kept, and the whole work of the house of Ahab—in whose counsels ye go | in order that I make thee a horror and her inhabitants a hissing, to the end that ye bear the shame of my people! ||

## 3.

(A GODLY MAN):

## VII.

- 1 O woe is me that it is with me as at fruit-harvests, as at the vintage-gleaning: | there is no cluster to eat, nor early-fig which my soul desired! || The good have disappeared from the land, and the upright among men are no more; | all lie in wait for blood, one hunting the other in

the net. || On account of the misdeed of the hands—to make it good—the prince is besought and the judge for payment: | and the great-man speaketh his self-conceit, and so they wrest it. || The best of them is as a bramble-bush, the upright from a thorn hedge: | —the day of thy outlookers, thy punishment is come: now will their confusion take place! ||

(A SECOND GODLY MAN):

5 Trust not a friend, confide not in an acquaintance, | from the wife of thy bosom\* guard the utterances of thy mouth! || For the son ridiculeth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, | the enemies of every man are the people of his house! ||

4.

(THE COMMUNITY):

But I will look out unto Yahvé, will wait for the God of my salvation: | my God will hear me. || Rejoice not my enemy† over me! for I fall I rise again, | when I sit in darkness, Yahvé is my light. || Yahvé's anger will I bear, because I have sinned against him, | until he conduct my cause and execute my right, bring me forth to the light  
10 that I look upon his righteousness, || in order that my enemy may see it and shame cover her, she

\* Germ.: *von deiner busenvertrautlin*.—Tr.

† Germ.: *meine feindin*.—Tr.

who said unto me “where is Yahvé thy God?” |  
my eyes will feast on her, now will she be as mire  
of the streets for treading upon! ||

(YAHVÉ):

It is a day for building thy walls; | that day—  
distant is the date! || At that day—then will men  
come to thee from Assyria and the cities of the  
Land-of-Distress, and from the Land-of-Distress  
unto the River, from sea to sea and mountain to  
mountain! || But the land will become a desert on  
account of its inhabitants, | in consequence of  
their deeds.

## 5.

(THE PROPHET):

Pasture thy people with thy staff as sheep of thy  
heritage, solitarily inhabiting a forest in the midst  
of Karmel! | may they pasture in Bashan and  
15 Gilead as in the days of old! || as in the days when  
thou marchedst forth from the land of Egypt | cause  
it to see wonders! || May nations seeing that be  
ashamed at all their might, | putting the hand upon  
the mouth, with deafened ears! || may they lick the  
dust like the serpent, as the crawlers of the earth  
quake forth from their enclosures, | unto Yahvé  
our God may they tremble, and fear before thee! ||

Who is a God like thee, that forgiveth guilt and  
passeth by transgression to the remnant of his  
heritage, | retaineth not for ever his anger, but  
delighteth in grace! || he will again have pity upon

us, tread down our iniquities; | wilt cast into the  
 20 depths of the sea all their sins, || wilt bestow faith-  
 fulness on Yaqob, grace on Abraham, | which  
 thou hast sworn unto our Fathers from the days of  
 old ! ||

1. After the prophet has announced an utterance of Yahvé's (alas, what other utterance is it than that of a just controversy or contention with his people !) and referred the people to the mountains as umpires, ver. 1, he calls upon the latter also to hear his complaint in the dispute of Yahvé's which is just about to be opened, ver. 2.

In the complaint which follows, vv. 3-5, it is as if omnipotence laid aside its own nature and for the moment put itself on a par with men ; its purpose is to provoke the defence of the accused, and it reminds the nation but briefly of the great benefits and proofs of favour which once formed and preserved them—in order that the nation may recognize the *righteousnesses*, *i.e.*, the righteousness which manifests itself in such various ways, or the righteous thoughts and deeds of Yahvé ! as is added at last with a certain emphasis. The people are briefly reminded of all the great events of the good times of old, commencing with the exodus from Egypt, ver. 4, especially of the remarkable prophecies of Bileam, ver. 5, which are already conceived in full accordance with the description of the events that took place in connexion with Balaq, Num. xxii.-xxiv. The following words, *from Shittim to Gilgal*, are probably an ancient marginal observation, intended to serve as a reference to the last portion of the Pentateuch where the history of Bileam might be found, comp. Num. xxv. 1 ; xxxi. 8 ; Josh. iv. 20.

In the presence of the word of pure truth, denial is of no avail in this trial : now that the nation ought to answer, it can find no justification of itself, vv. 6, 7. But still, as hitherto, possessed by an indolent, slavishly timid spirit, it cannot rise

to true insight, or even to the power of true contrition and repentance, but proposes in a slavish sense, as if Yahvé demanded eternal sacrifices, to give every possible material atonement,—yea, even the sacrifice of its own dearest children if Yahvé should demand them! since man estranged from the Divine life is more willing to sacrifice any external object, were it at other times his dearest possession, than to give up his own fainthearted, confused thoughts, and to live to Yahvé alone. And human sacrifices were as a fact not uncommon at that time.

The highest voice is wholly unable to make a direct reply to this crude, inexcusable error of the poor-spirited nation; the plaintiff, against whom the defendant has not been able to produce anything at all, disappears naturally, and instead of Yahvé the prophet only answers as the mediator, correcting the serious error in a few words, ver. 8: it has long ago been clearly proclaimed to the people by the ancient lawgivers and prophets what Yahvé really demands of it, and what simple, but great, universal and necessary demands these are! comp. Luke xvi. 29. Zech. vii. 9, 10; viii. 16, 17, 19.

2. But, as a sudden peal of thunder, the distant, terrible voice of Yahvé vibrates through the prophet. After the proceedings of the accusation have come to an end, Yahvé has again resumed his position of judge, and irrespective of anything further, pronounces the judicial sentence which, according to strict principles of justice, must follow the accusation, together with the reasons for it, vv. 9-16. And as if the prophet were collecting himself from the first shock of the terrible sound, he first inserts the words: *yet surely it is salvation to fear thy name!* i. e., it now appears that it is really not a vain thing to fear thy name, whilst the unrighteous must tremble. The severe words of the judge are addressed to the community (properly the *tribe*, Yuda) *and him who appoints it*, calls together and guides it, whoever he may be (but of course the king is intended). And since a good judge never gives



judgment without supplying his reasons, the Divine voice enquires, whether the injustices of all kinds ought still to go on? (vv. 10, 11; comp. Amos viii. 5). This enquiry is put to that community which, as this voice well knows, is full of cruelty towards the helpless and of cheating and lies, and which would have done better if instead of those cowardly subterfuges it had previously confessed with true penitence openly before the omniscient accuser, these great transgressions which the judge must now publicly charge it with. If Israel, therefore, on its part is incorrigible, then Yahvé also has on his part to smite it as good as incurably with these words of judgment, although it may be horrified at the punishments which are here apportioned to it, ver. 13. These terrible punishments are, that it shall work and live in vain, tortured as it were by ravenous hunger in the midst of eating, Job xviii. 12, 13, and that it shall have followed the projects and laws of the godless kings, 1 Kings xvi. 25, only to be destroyed, to serve for ridicule to the world, and to bear not the honour but the shame of a people of Yahvé! For the greater the honour of being Yahvé's nation is, when this honour has once been recognised in the world, the more profoundly are they despised who have lost this honour.

3. Is this Divine punishment, then, if it really comes as has been above proclaimed, too severe, and not fully deserved even according to the nation's own conscience? Alas, let only the sincere and true voice of the nation be listened to! What are the simple and truly godly men of the people, of whom there are always some, thinking and saying? A time always comes when their voice also may be heard loudly enough; and after that former voice, which might be public, but was nevertheless half hypocritical, half mean-spirited, vi. 6, 7, has for good reasons become silent, this of the truly godly among the people may be heard more distinctly. Accordingly the voice of such a man is now heard, a man who, notwithstanding his strong desires to do so, was unable to find a just man in the land:

it happens to him as if in the gleanings of fruit and grapes, as poor people are accustomed to do, he had sought in vain for any refreshing fruit, Hos. ix. 10 ; there are, as is explained in detail from ver. 2 onwards, no more any who are well-pleasing to Yahvé in the land, Ps. xii. 2 sq., their only endeavour is to get the advantage of each other, to ensnare and capture, even if it were by sanguinary means, ver. 2 ; but the magnates and judges, who ought to check the growing injustice, promote it from selfish motives, are prepared for gold to stamp the evil deed as a good one, if they are requested to do so, speak only their own conceit and pervert *it*, *i.e.* the judgment which they pronounce, ver. 3 ; even those who are comparatively the best among them are like thorns, owing to their prickly, false sides, hard to touch and handle, ver. 4 *a* ; Ps. lviii. 10 ; Nah. i. 10. Here in the midst of this sad but true experience, the man himself is seized by the conviction of the necessity of those punishments of the nation, so that he cries out, ver. 4 *b* : the day of thy outlookers, the day which thy attentive prophets who are ever looking out into the future (Is. xxi. 11, 12 ; Hab. ii. 1) long ago announced, thy examination and punishment, is here ! now will their confusion commence, so that the people who knew how to protect themselves by thorny tricks become now, when seized by higher punishment, themselves confused and helpless !—And then a second equally solitary godly man of this kind is heard complaining, that even amongst friends and nearest relatives mutual faithfulness has disappeared, ver. 6, comp. Jer. ix. 3 ; xii. 6.

4. But if such pure voices, although they may come but from solitary souls, begin to be heard in due time, their sincerity and truth may happily be once more operative in the entire community. In a community which, like this, is that of the true religion, in spite of all declensions there always remains not only the eternal hope, but also an indestructible foundation of good ; for if in its present form the community perishes irremediably, it rises again in the future in a purified

and nobler form. Still the germ and possibility of the future regenerated community already exists in the present one, however much it may be repressed and hidden; otherwise the new community could never arise: the future attainments are present aspirations. Accordingly there is now heard as from an entirely different quarter, the voice of the community; it is heard in confiding prayer to Yahvé, resolved to bear whatever punishments are due for former sins, and patiently to wait till the day of redemption may arrive, deeply humbled, yet not without hope or just pride; for, to set over against its own unworthiness, it knows that its enemy [Heb. *'ôyebeth*; Germ. *feindin*), that heathendom which is at present so haughty and eager to destroy, cannot go on for ever to conquer, but the day of the punishment of the Assyrians and of the redemption of the believers who are oppressed by them, must also come, vv. 7-10. And who could help at once giving in his agreement with such immortal thoughts and new endeavours after reformation!

And, behold, the Divine answer which has been thus prompted and provoked, as if a point of honour had been touched, is no longer simply like the former severe rebuke, seeming to leave no room for hope: as in the rapid flight of glorified and transporting outlook, it promises a glorious day of restoration, a day whose date, however, is still far off, since the land in consequence of its grievous transgressions must first suffer its punishment, vv. 11-13. The discourse, vv. 11, 12, is composed of partial hints and abrupt words, brief and disconnected in the extreme, and yet clear to the attentive hearer.

5. But here, by way of rapid conclusion, is the fitting place for the prophet's especial and separate utterance: as he began the entire piece, vi. 1, 2, and spoke in the middle of it the decisive word between Yahvé and the nations, vi. 16, it is still more necessary that he should here speak once more to close the entire proceedings. For though in the present, upon the

actual earnestness of which everything finally depends, he is too weak to ward off the threatening Divine punishments and sufferings, there is still left to him the power to wrestle in earnest believing prayer for the Divine mercy, and to make importunate intercession on behalf of his country : and in strong, wrestling prayer he gathers together all that further agitates his prophetic heart, and thereby finally stills all his desire and aspiration. May Yahvé as the good shepherd guide his people, his community, which can after all never be separated from him, as though it were a retired, protected little flock in the forest of fair Karmel, Num. xxiii. 9 ; Deut. xxiii. 28 ; but may this flock also again take possession of all its former territory, the land since lost beyond the Yordan, Zech. x. 10 ! Yet such wishes can now be realised only by something like a repetition of the ancient deliverance from Egypt : may this time of the exaltation of Israel, when the Assyrians, who are now so haughty, and other heathen, trembling forth with shame from their fortified castles, submit to Yahvé (Ps. xviii. 46 ; lxxvi. 5, 11), not be too far off !—Truly, there is no other God from whom such things could be looked for with trustful confidence ! In the true spiritual God there is this also included, that his eternal purpose is only the good, simply salvation and life : wherever, as is the case in this community, the genuine Divine spirit has been operative from ancient times, he is ever working there in the abolition of guilt and promotion of reconciliation, and thus he will overcome by his omnipotence the errors and sufferings of the present, complete the work which had long ago been commenced and promised in this sacred community, vv. 18-20.

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The main thing here, as in every drama, is to catch the right voices and their right alternation ; and unless this is done an interpretation must be in the highest degree uncertain. Thus, *e. g.*, it is as important, as according to the plan of the drama



it is correct, that the prophet himself speaks immediately three times only, but in each case at the proper place: as a voluntary mediator he begins and closes, and speaks as such in the middle also at the proper place. But that the words vii. 1-6, are not meant to be taken as his may also be seen from the simple fact of the allusion to the prophets and the judgment-day long ago announced by them. With regard to the *five acts*, comp. *Dichter des A.B.* I a, p. 69 sq.

vi. 2. The translation of אִתִּינִים [Germ. *ewig gleichen*] is a free adaptation of its primary meaning.—*Wearied thee*, vi. 3, so that from vexation and satiety thou leavest me and goest to other Gods.

If the words from *Shittim unto Gilgal* belonged to the original text, we should have to suppose that the prophet wished to refer to the narratives of the last portion of the journeyings of Israel under Moses: at the same time, although this is another distinction of our prophet compared with Mikha, Yesaya, and still older prophets, that he makes frequent allusions to the ancient histories, we cannot think he would in this connexion make a purely learned reference of such a strange and especially of such a superfluous nature. We must consider that the prophet, though he is a writer and not a speaker, displays great artistic effort.

Instead of יִרְאֶה, vi. 9, it is simplest to read יִרְאֶה, or rather the first form must be so understood, acc. § 173 f, so that שמך is governed as the accusative by this infinitive.—The use of the third person sing., ver. 11, when the subject of the verb is indefinite, Germ. *man*, our *we*, *they*, *people*, is found again in our prophet, vii. 3, 12.

אֶשֶׁר, vi. 12, refers back to מִטָּה, ver. 9, for its antecedent; הַזֵּכָה, ver. 11, must stand for הַיֹּזֶכָה, acc. § 53 c, comp. הָאֵשׁ, ver. 10; the waning measure, literally the *declining*, *wasting* measure, which by the deceit of the seller grows less and less.

vi. 16, one might be at first sight disposed to read וַיֵּשׁ



instead of וַיֵּשׁ, since וַתִּלְכִּי follows: but this is not necessary, and the simple present is really most suitable at the commencement of this sentence. From the tone of the commencement of the strophe, ver. 10, one may conclude that either our prophet or another had a short time before spoken loudly but in vain against these injustices of the market. With regard to צוּר with הָרָם, vii. 2, comp. § 283 *a* and Hab. i. 16, 17.—It is clear that the construction of the sentence, vii. 3, is considerably involved: and since our prophet, as was remarked vi. 11, often uses the third person sing. when the subject is indefinite, שׂוֹאֵל may be taken to mean *they request the prince and the judge*; for that יֵאָת is not necessary in this case before הַשִּׁיר, follows from § 277 *d*. The participle is used as in ver. 6, but can afterwards change into the regular verb וַיַּעֲבִטוּ.\* First the subordinate official and the judge are bribed, then their unjust sentence is confirmed in the further appeal to the magnate, *i.e.*, the higher official, and thus the *perversion* (עֲבַט) of the matter is complete. But precisely because these three persons co-operate to produce the final result, the sing. changes at the end into the plur., וַיַּעֲבִטוּ.—The expression *from a thorn-hedge*, vii. 4, is only a stronger way of putting *like a thorn-hedge*, just as *from nothing*, “Isa.” xli. 24 is only a stronger form of *as nothing*.—The brief word *outlooker*, scout, for *prophet* in ordinary discourse is quite new here and “Isa.” lvi. 10, as appears from the passages collected vol. I. p. 28 sq.

It appears from the entire plan of the drama that the words vii. 11-13 are put into the mouth of Yahvé: the prophet speaks again vii. 14. But inasmuch as this prophecy, vv. 11, 12, is not intended to take place before a distant period, it takes the form of a few supernatural, mysterious hints, only indicating with a few vague outlines far off events, these outlines growing more and more indistinct and losing themselves

\* The author writes the word three times with ע.—*Tr.*

in the mists of the future. Particular words are also exceedingly graphic: **יִרְחַק חֶק**, ver. 11, how deep and mysterious is their sound! And so the solemn prophecy proceeds almost without interruption. At the same time, a little consideration reveals the meaning of the words. The existing Jerusalem must fall: it shall be restored in the future, but how far distant is that still! Restored but made more glorious than before, so that from the widest circuit all again flock back to it who can be considered as its citizens, from the north-east unto the south-west, and again from the south-west to the north-east, from sea to sea and mountain to mountain! And it is evident that such passages as Isa. xi. 11, 12; xxvii. 12, 13; Amos viii. 12, *et al.*, are in the mind of the writer, only that the close especially, *mountain to mountain*, has a much more general force. *The date*, **חֶק**, is, therefore, in this connexion *its date*, that of the day just mentioned, §. 309 *b*; **יּוֹם הַהוּא**, ver. 12, is still shorter than **יּוֹם הַהוּא**, ver. 11, comp. §. 293 *a*, and **חֶק הַחֶקֶר** still shorter than **יּוֹם מָצֵי**, comp. Nah. iii. 8 and §. 349 *b*. Word-painting of this description by means of extreme brevity is of late origin, and is hardly met with earlier than in our prophet. The rapid change from the feminine to the masculine suffix in ver. 11 and ver. 12 might seem to show that the community is addressed in ver. 11, and Israel in ver. 12: but there is no reason for this, and from the whole context it is evident that it is the community only that is addressed.—The subjoined condition, ver. 13, like Mic. v. 9-14, or still more like Isa. xxxii. 19, 20.

vii. 15 **אֶרְאֶה** must stand for **אֶרְאֶה** acc. §. 122 *a*, since the imperative only is here suitable.

## 2. OTHER ANONYMOUS PROPHETS.

From such we have at all events unmistakeable fragments. Oracles like "Isa." xl. 1; liii. 1 sq.; lvi. 9 sq.; lvii. 1 sq.,

bear every mark of an origin from Manasse's days, have great similarity to the piece which has just been explained, although plainly to be referred to other prophets, and their tone is such that they could have arisen only in a time of still greater temptation and trial of the faithful. But it will be best to treat of them subsequently.

The following table may be useful in as far as it gives a bird's-eye view of general results as regards the order of the origin of the component portions of the book. But it is purposely general in its information. No exact dates, but only larger periods have been indicated, and the order rather than the year of the origin of each piece may be gathered from it. The supposed date might have been prefixed to each piece, but in more ways than one such precision might mislead in a table of this kind. Besides, the new light of Assyrian inscriptions may considerably affect the dates of certain pieces of the book, while they are not likely substantially to alter the order of their succession.\* Nor is the table intended to save the reader the trouble of consulting the works of the critics whose arrangements have been given. He will find the table positive where the critic is often doubtful; he will also find a piece placed not quite accurately for some reason or other. But it is believed that legitimately and cautiously consulted, the table will be instructive.

At first it was intended to add a column giving the arrangement adopted by Ewald in the first edition of his work (1840), but when it was drawn up it presented so few really important variations from that of the second edition that it seemed almost superfluous, and when placed in a bare table might rather mislead than instruct. In the first edition Ewald separated the productions of Isaiah into three great groups, and doubted the possibility of a complete restoration of their original form. In the second edition, he no longer considered this an impossibility, and discovered the seven books of this volume. But this discovery produced no very important change in the order of the pieces. Ch. vi. was in the first edition placed before the piece, ii. 2-v. 25; xvii. 1-11, before vii. 1-ix. 6; i. after the foreign oracles, xxi. 11-17; xx. before x. 5-xi. 16. The pieces xxi. 11, 12, xxi. 13-17, were treated as two oracles, Isaianic throughout.

The non-Isaianic pieces are italicised in the columns.—*Tr.*

\* I learn from Mr. Cheyne that he has seen reason since 1870 to alter his opinion with regard to the chronology of some of the prophecies included in the book of "Isaiah." The Assyrian discoveries have been the cause of this change, so far as the genuine portion of Isaiah is concerned, and it is to be earnestly hoped that Mr. Cheyne will take an early opportunity of expounding their bearing on the prophecies of this book.

# CHRONOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE BOOK OF "ISAIAH."

	EWALD.*	GESNIUS.†	KNOBEL.‡	KUENEN.§	CHEYNE.	REUSS.¶
Post 897	xxv., xvi. 7-12 xvi. 1-6	xxv., xvi. 12?	xxv., xvi. 12	xxv., xvi. 12	xxv., xvi. 12	xxv., xvi. 12
UZZIA.						
JOTHAM.			xxvii. 1-11 xvi. 13, 14 xxi. 13-17 xxi. 11, 12 ii.-iv.		ix. 8-x. 4 v. 25-30	
AMAZ.	ii. 2-v. 25 ix. 7-x. 4 v. 26-30	vi. ii.-v. vii. 1-16, 17-25 viii. 1-ix. 6 xxvii. 1-11 ix. 7-x. 4 xiv. 28-32	vi. v. vii. viii.-ix. 6 i. ix. 7-x. 4 xiv. 28-32	ii.-iv. v. vii. xxvii. 1-11 ix. 7-x. 4 xiv. 28-32	ii.-v. 25 xxvii. 1-11	i. ii.-iv. v. vi. xxvii. 1-11 vii. 1-ix. 6 ix. 7-x. 4
HEZEKIAH.	vi. 1-ix. 6 xxvii. 1-11 i. xiv. 28-32 xvi. 13-14 xvi. 11, 12 xxvii. 1-14 xxi. 15-17 xxii. 1-14 xxiii. 1-14	xxviii. 1-18 x. 5-xxii. 6 xiv. 24-27 xvi. 13, 14 xxviii.-xxxiii. xxvii. 12-xxviii. 7 xx. xxi. 11, 12, 13-17 xxii. 1-14	xxviii. { x. 5-xxii. 6 xiv. 24-27 xxviii. xix. xx. xxi. xxx.-xxxiii. xxvii. 12-xxviii. 7	xxi. 11, 12 xxi. 13, 14 xvi. 13, 14 xxviii. xxiii. xix. xx. xxix. xxx.-xxxiii.	vi. 1-ix. 7 i. xiv. 28-32 xvi. 13, 14 xxi. 11, 12 xxi. 13-17 xxii. 1-14 xxii. 15-25 xxiii. 1-14	x. 5-xxii. 6 xiv. 29-32? xxviii. xxix. xxx. xxxi. 1-xxxii. 8 xxxii. 9-20 xxxiii. xx.



HEZEKIAH.	xxviii.—xxxii. x. 5—xii. 6 { xvii. 12—xviii. 7 xiv. 24-37 xx. xxviii.? xxxvii. 22-35 xix.	xxii. 15-25 xxii. 1-14 xxxiii.	xxii. 15-25 xxii. 1-14 x. 5—xii. 6 xiv. 24-27 i. xvii. 12-14 xviii. xxxiii.	xxiii. 15-18? xxviii. xxix. xxx. xxxii. 1-8 xxxiii. 9-20 x. 5—xii. 6 xiv. 24-27 xx. xvii. 12-14 xxviii. xxxiii. xxxvii. 22-35 xix.	xxii. 15-25 xxii. 1-14 xiv. 24-27 xxi. 11, 12 xxi. 13-17 xxviii.? xix. xxxvii. 21-35
MANASSEH.	xl. 1, 2 lvi. 13—lvii. 12 lvi. 9—lvii. 11	xix. 1-17, 21-25 vv. 18-20?			
EXILE.	xi. 1-10 xii. 2—xiv. 23 xl.—lvi. xxv.—xxvii. xvi. 1-6	viii.—xiv. 23 xvi. 1-10 xxv.—xxvii. xxv.—xxvii. xl.—lvi.	xv.—xxvii. xxv.—xxvii. xvi.—xiv. 23 xvi. 1-10 xl.—lvi.	xxv.—xxvii. xxv.—xxvii. xvi. 1-10 xvi. 2—xiv. 23 xl.—lvi.	xxv.—xxvii. xvi. 1—xiv. 23 xvi. 1-10 xxv.—xxvii. xl.—lvi.
RETURN.	xv.—xxvii. xxiii. 15-18				

\* The second edition (1867) of the *Propheten des Alten Bundes*, of which the present work is a translation.

† *Philologisch-kritischer und historischer Commentar über den Jesaja von Wilhelm Gesenius*, Leipzig. 1821.

‡ *Der Prophet Jesaja erklärt von Dr. August Knobel*, 4te Auflage, herausgegeben von Dr. Ludwig Diefel. Leipzig, 1872.

§ *Historisch-kritisch Onderzoek naar het Onstaan der Boeken des Ouden Verbonds* door A. Kuenen, Hoogleeraar te Leiden, tweede Deel. Leiden, 1863.

¶ *The Book of Isaiah Chronologically arranged* by T. K. Cheyne, M.A. London, 1870.

¶ *Les Prophètes par Edouard Reuss*, Professeur à l'Université de Strasbourg. Paris, 1876.

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